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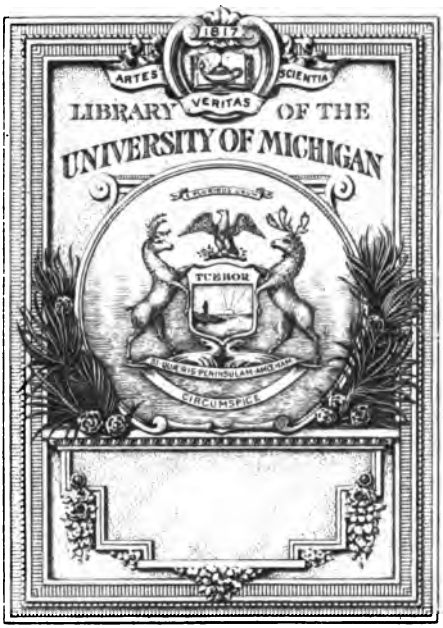
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THE WORKING FORCES IN JAPANESE POLITICS

A Brief Account of Political Conflicts 1867-1920

BY

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B.9.

1

THE WORKING FORCES IN JAPANESE POLITICS

ception of Japanese political institutions underwent a change. This small book of Professor Giddings gave him the hint for the present study.

Many books have been written on Japanese politics, and many of them are widely read in the West. Among the best are Dr. Uyehara's *The Political Development of Japan*, Dr. McLaren's *A Political History of Japan*, Dr. McGovern's *Modern Japan*, and Mr. Pooley's *Japan at the Crossroads*. Some of these books are historical, and some are analytical of laws only. None of them presents an entirely adequate analysis of actual political conditions, as they appear in a moving society.

The writer has no thought of deprecating these books. He wishes to supplement them. They are invaluable to anyone who wishes to gain a glimpse of Japanese politics, and no student of the subject should neglect them. Any differences which may appear between the conclusions of these authorities and of the present writer are due largely to a difference in viewpoint.

This small book is not intended to be an exhaustive treatise. Its purpose will be fulfilled if the reader gains from it a point of view and a suggestion for further study.

Special references to the authorities are infrequent in the following pages, but the accuracy of the historical statements made may be readily verified by the historical works listed in the bibliography.

The writer is particularly indebted to Professors Franklin H. Giddings and A. A. Tenney, of the Department of Sociology, Columbia University, for their instruction and guidance, which he will always remember with gratitude. Acknowledgment must be made to all members of the Department of Sociology, especially to

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UICHI IWASAKI.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY, NEW YORK CITY.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I

SUPERFICIAL observers of political and social events in Japan often marvel at what they call the "extraordinary adaptability" of the Japanese. In a few decades, they say, Japan, on her own initiative, transformed herself from a feudal state into a modern nation. Westerners are fond of this interpretation of modern Japanese history, and many natives of Japan agree with them.

Although this view is in harmony with the superficial facts, it is, the writer believes, essentially misleading. To be sure, Japan now has a constitution which in her feudal days would have been impossible. Her intercourse with the western world has, moreover, greatly modified many of the customs and institutions of her people. But to interpret these facts as indicative of an essential and a complete revolution is to exaggerate greatly.

No nation could, over night, effect a change as complete as the Japanese are said to have effected. Least of all could the Japanese, who have shown themselves to be socially static. For three centuries they remained supine under the feudalism of the Tokugawa shōgunate, with its rigid forms and iron-clad class distinctions. The early Tokugawas knew how to rule, and they established themselves firmly amid a network of laws and customs unbelievably intricate and intolerable, which impressed themselves

indelibly on the minds of the people. Above the shōgun of course, was the Emperor, enshrined in the holy city and worshipped by all, but he was powerless, and in his name the shōgun controlled the nation.

The time came, in the middle of the nineteenth century, when the power of the shōgun was doomed to end. Japan opened her doors to foreigners, and it was impossible for her to continue the feudal system. As a result of this situation came the readjustment called the Meiji Restoration. It is this Meiji Restoration that has given to casual observers the impression that Japan has undergone a complete revolution, and has won for the Japanese a reputation for extraordinary adaptability.

As a matter of fact, long established customs cannot be changed in a day. A new society is not to be begotten by the word or act of a group of statesmen. It can be won only after long and painful experience. When circumstances demand a change in the life of a people, as in the Meiji period they demanded a change in the life of Japan, the people, following the line of least resistance, will alter their manners, but they will make the smallest alteration that the exigencies of the moment permit.

Thus, when the Japanese feudal system was destroyed in 1867 there was set up in its stead a bureaucracy that retained the spirit of the shōgunate. It is not too much to say that the political and social institutions of the new Japan were only another expression of the Tokugawa system.

II

Let us consider the Meiji Restoration, with a view to discovering the nature and extent of the change that it has brought to Japan.

In feudal Japan the rulers were as follows: first the

Emperor, his family and the court nobles, who lived secluded in Kyōto and took no active part in the affairs of the government; second, the shōgun, or feudal overlord, who ruled the entire nation; third, the daimyō or feudal lords, who ruled absolutely over parts of the country which they held as fiefs of the shōgun; and fourth, the samurai or knights, who formed the intellectual or fighting class and to whom the daimyō turned over most of the real administrative work. The heimin or common people had no power, and, of course, the capitalist class had not yet arisen. The stronger of the daimyō, who were at the head of powerful clans such as Choshū and Satsuma, were rivals of the shōgun, and were ready to seize control of the state at the slightest sign of weakness in the rulers.

In the days of his strength the shōgun was really terrible. But "if there is spring, there must be fall," says a Japanese proverb, and in the middle of the nineteenth century it was plain that the spring of the Tokugawas was over. Perry and the American fleet came to Japan in 1853, and the nation was faced with the peril of foreign invasion. A western civilization from which they could not hold aloof was shown to the Japanese, and it was apparent to all that something had to be done. The clans, led by the daimyō of Chōshū and Satsuma, arose in rebellion, and the shōgun failed in his attempt to subdue them. The result was the end of the Tokugawas.

On the face of it this was simply a struggle between the shōgun and the daimyō, but behind the daimyō were the samurai, men of real ability, who took advantage of this opportunity to increase their own power and to bring themselves into prominence. An examination of the names of those who played the most important part in the Meiji Restoration and in the conduct of the government that followed will easily show how remarkably the samurai of

Chōshū, Satsuma, Hizen and Tosa, the most powerful of the clans, succeeded in their purpose. The samurai knew the situation better than any others. They played the shōgun against the lords, and themselves came out on top.

The heimin—farmers, artisans and the merchants—took no part in this. It was a game played by the ruling classes.

This struggle, at the time of threatened foreign invasion, placed the nation in a precarious position. The confusion was great, and it was feared that the consequences would be serious. Each of the struggling classes saw the danger, and cast about for a leader who could unify the nation. The shōgun could not take the fore, because his power had been broken; no one of the lords would do, for his influence, however great, was merely local; and the samurai did not feel themselves strong enough openly to set themselves up as the ruling class. The obvious solution was—the Emperor.

In the history of Japan there is no record of revolt against the Imperial Dynasty which has ruled Japan since prehistoric times.[1] Because of this loyalty, and because it has been the policy of the Dynasty to espouse the cause of the more progressive parties, it has been an unbroken custom to look to the Imperial family in time of great disturbance. To the Emperor, then, the leaders of the Meiji Restoration turned. Each of the struggling factions sought his support, but, true to the policy of his line, he threw the

[1] This does not mean that there have been no revolts against ministers or shōguns of some Emperors, or even against certain Empefors themselves. But the revolutionists in no case have wished to overthrow the Imperial House. Many times one Emperor has been deposed and one of his relatives set up in his stead. For instance, in the early thirteenth century the Shōgun Hōjō Yoshitoki deposed the Emperor Chūkiō, and put upon the throne the Emperor's cousin, who then became known as Go-Horikawa-Tennō. But no one not of the old Imperial blood has ever attempted to usurp the throne.

weight of his tremendous prestige upon the side of the revolting daimyō. The samurai who were behind the daimyō took advantage of this to completely crush the shōgun and establish themselves in power.

Thus, the Meiji Restoration was accomplished with the Emperor as its center and the samurai, as the greatest force behind it. It was, as the writer has said, a struggle of the ruling classes in which the common people took no part. The revolution was more political than social. It was a transference of power from one ruling group to another, and the groups which emerged triumphant had been in the upper strata of society in the pre-revolutionary days. The whole movement was a small wave in the great still ocean of Japanese life, which continued to retain the traditional spirit of feudalism. In point of form only was the revolution great.

III

Into the chaos which followed the overthrowing of the shōgun came the influence of European political philosophies. The Japanese soon saw that in reforming their government they must adopt western ideas. There were presented to them the French idea, the heritage of Rousseau and his philosophy of the social contract; the English idea, based upon the theories of John Stuart Mill, Adam Smith and the rest of the Utilitarians; and the American idea, based upon the Declaration of Independence, and involving the establishment of a democratic republic. The ruling classes rejected all of these as too democratic. Seeking further for a philosophy that would counteract these influences, they found in Germany the idea best fitted to their purposes. Accordingly, they took advantage of the natural conservatism of the Japanese people and their intense national patriotism, and gave them a constitutional mon-

archy on the German model, somewhat modified to suit the peculiar needs of Japan.[1]

The Emperor resumed his ancient position as the head of the state. A bicameral legislature, consisting of a House of Peers and a House of Representatives, was created. A cabinet was established, but it was not made responsible to the legislature. An independent judiciary was formed. Closest to the throne under the new constitution was the privy council, which, like the judiciary, was independent of all other governmental agencies except the Emperor, who exercised only a nominal control. Most influential of all was an extra-constitutional body, the council of Genrō or Elder Statesmen, which dominated all.

In this there is little of democracy. The class lines which had been established and made rigid under the Tokugawas was largely retained, and each of the ruling classes took a place of influence in the new order. The daimyō or lords of the clans were created peers. These, by way of compensation for voluntarily restoring their fiefs to the crown, sat in the upper house of the legislature.

The samurai, under the new regime, may be divided into two classes: those who were successful in the scramble for power and those who were unsuccessful. The former, for the most part, were of the Chōshū and Satsuma clans, and these took the important positions in the bureaucracy. Chōshū controlled the army and Satsuma the navy, and the samurai of these two clans formed the majority in the Genrō council. The samurai of the lesser clans found themselves left behind, and led by the men of Hizen and Tosa, formed political parties in opposition to the bureaucrats. Their stronghold was the lower house of the legislature.

[1] See Mr. K. Kawakami's *Political Ideas of Modern Japan*, The University of Iowa.

Thus was established the Meiji bureaucracy, a readjustment of the forces of feudalism under a constitution that was a compromise among the interests of the several ruling classes. The common people were left out. The Emperor, while theoretically at the head, in reality exercised his authority almost entirely according to the advice of the Genrō and the prime minister. The Genrō, samurai in origin, carried on the traditions of feudalism. Exercising great authority and taking advantage of their extra-constitutional status, they were the true power behind the throne. The bureaucrats, their protégés, fought under their protection against the political parties, allying themselves with their friends in the House of Peers, with the Privy Council and with the army and navy. This bureaucratic combination maintained its supremacy for thirty years, and not until the close of the Meiji Era (1868-1912) was it forced to recognize the power of the political parties and to compromise with them.

At first the political parties were idealistic, seeking to defeat the bureaucrats, the Genrō and the peers, and to establish a true parliamentary government on the Anglo-Saxon model. Later, in the bitterness of defeat at the hands of their rivals, they modified their demands and compromised. At the same time they gradually aligned themselves with the industrial capitalists who were becoming powerful in the meanwhile.

During the Meiji Era Japan was in a comparatively static condition. The ruling forces—Genrō, aristocrats, bureaucrats, militarists and political parties—were in a state of equilibrium.

IV

The foregoing is, the writer thinks, a fair sketch of the conditions which followed the abolition of the shōgunate. But in order faithfully to picture the Japan of to-day we must add another stroke to the drawing: a description of the rise of industrialism in what is called the Taishō Era.

The industrial revolution reached Japan at the close of the nineteenth century. In feudal days the chief occupation of the nation was agriculture; but in modern times a nation of small area with insufficient natural resources must turn to manufacturing if it is to keep its place in the economic world. So it was with Japan, as with England and Germany before her.

The ruling military classes observed the tendency towards industrialism. Doubtless they saw the danger, but at the same time they realized that if they were to compete on the field of battle with the nations of the West they must not be afraid of the modernization of their own country. Therefore, as a part of their program of preparedness for war, they encouraged industry, particularly shipbuilding and the manufacture of steel.

Just at this time China was being opened as a world market and a source of raw materials. The western nations saw their opportunity and scrambled for concessions, and Japan saw that if she would retain her natural advantages in this field she must develop her industry. As a result of all these influences many of the agricultural workers of Japan flocked to the cities and became factory hands, and the economic status of the nation was transformed.

Parallel with the industrial revolution came the spread of education. The ruling classes saw the value of education, and they adopted a scheme of compulsory schooling which reduced illiteracy to an amazingly low figure. The control of the schools was an enormous power in the hands

of the bureaucrats, but they exercised that power in a way that left open a path for the growth of liberalism. On the one hand they emphasized the beauty of Japanese culture, with much flag waving and suggestions derogatory to all foreigners, and on the other they urged the necessity of embracing the material side of western civilization. The study of foreign languages, particularly English, was required, in order that the students might familiarize themselves with conditions in the rest of the world; but this redounded to the disadvantage of the ruling classes, for it enabled the educated people to read about western thought as well as western business, and many of them began to realize that Japanese culture was not the only one on the market. Since English was a required language in the secondary schools, British and American ideas permeated the nation, and encouraged the growth of liberalism. The presence in Japan of more than 1000 American and British missionaries and teachers had a powerful influence in the same direction.

At the same time came an improvement in the means of transportation and communication. The Japanese railway system, under the encouragement of the bureaucracy, has reached an extraordinarily high development. While it is not as extensive as that of England or the United States, yet it is further advanced than the railway systems of such European countries as Italy or Spain. From Tōkyō a traveller can reach the remotest parts of Japan in a few days. At the same time the telephone, telegraph and postal systems have reached a high point of efficiency under a government monopoly. The bureaucracy encouraged this, impressed chiefly by the military advantage of good communications, and failing to observe the effect upon the growth of liberalism.

In this era newspapers began to appear in great numbers

throughout the nation, until every town of a population of ten thousand or more had at least one sheet. The papers were almost unanimous in their opposition to the bureaucracy.

As a climax came the World War, a greater revolutionary influence than any of these domestic developments. Participation in the struggle completed the opening of Japan which Perry had begun. Formerly the attention of the Japanese, after their isolation was broken, had been directed largely toward their oriental neighbors, China, Korea, Manchuria, Formosa, Siberia. Now this interest was definitely focussed upon Europe. The people could now make a comparison between the German and Anglo-Saxon civilizations, and the result of the war determined their decision on the relative merits of the two. Their tendency was to regard the war as a struggle between militarism and liberalism, in which liberalism came off victorious.[1]

The growth of radicalism in Europe after the war had its reflection in Japan. Labor unions arose and asserted their right to strike, and the socialist movement won a large measure of freedom from repression.

V

All this resulted in the rise of two new classes to join the aristocrats, the bureaucrats, the Elder Statesmen, the militarists, and the parties in the struggle for political supremacy. One of them, the capitalist group, has climbed in a few years to a position of domination.

In feudal days, the merchant was despised. The daimyō and samurai often needed him to finance their undertakings, but the farmer and the artisan were considered more

[1] The conduct of the Allied nations since the armistice, and the anti-American propaganda of the Japanese militarists weakened this conviction to some extent.

essential to the life of the nation, and won far greater respect than the mere trader and money lender. In the Meiji era the common people, including the merchants, were formally released from serfdom and made theoretically free. The merchants in the cities then took advantage of the increase in trade to improve their situation.

The industrial revolution, in Japan as elsewhere, brought the heyday of merchants and manufacturers. The despised money lender became the captain of finance. The artisan and the trader became the manufacturer and merchant prince. Especially great became the influence of those who gained control of shipbuilding, the munitions trade, the merchant marine, mining and metal manufacturing. All the while the influence of the country landlord remained stationary.

In the Meiji Era the merchants sought to advance their influence by hobnobbing with the bureaucrats and militarists. Later the political parties grew stronger and to them the industrialists turned their attention. They found this more favorable to their interests, because the politicians of a province were easier of access than a bureaucratic governor. Moreover, a party always needs campaign funds, and who is better able to supply these than a growing captain of industry? Thus there came about a tremendously powerful alliance between capital and the political parties, which triumphantly rose to power with the present Hara ministry. The existence of this alliance is proved by the very names of the members of Premier Hara's cabinet. They are among the leaders of Japanese business and finance.

To understand this is to gain an insight into the foreign policies of present-day Japan. While Hara is loud in his disclaimers of territorial ambition in Shantung and Siberia, he is much interested in economic concessions in outlying territories, which are valuable, of course, to his capitalist

friends, and he has compromised with the militarists in order to capture these concessions.

VI

Coincident with the rise of capital came, naturally, the development of a laboring class, the second great group developed by the industrial revolution. In the feudal days the workers were serfs. The Meiji Restoration freed them theoretically but actually left their position almost unchanged. The only advantage they won was the right to an education. With the industrial revolution the artisans came to the cities and began to develop into a class-conscious proletariat. With them came many of the farmers, driven into industry by the scarcity of land and the demand for industrial labor. These factory workers were open to the influence of propaganda, because most of them had now been taught to read. The newspapers they read did not increase their friendliness toward the government.

The laboring class was strengthened by the fact that the increasing cost of living forced into alliance with it those who would have preferred to remain petty bourgeois: namely, teachers, newspapermen, and small government officers, such as policemen, whose salaries were not advanced. These now joined with the factory workers, who had gained skill at their trades and whose prestige was increased by the demand for their labor. The workers shared to some extent the prosperity brought to Japan by the war. By their alliance with the lower middle class their group gained brains and learned ambition. Class consciousness had now arisen, and the Japanese proletariat of the present is considering whether it can best serve its interests by forming a political party and competing with the capitalists in the Diet, or by clinging to the trades-union principles of direct action, with frequent use of the strike and sabotage.

This, then, is the situation in Japan today: The aristocrats and the bureaucrats still exercise their traditional power through the House of Peers, the army and navy, and the Genro. Against them struggle the political parties, now powerful, which control the House of Representatives and are backed by the capitalists. The power of the capitalists in the Diet is not easily to be shaken, for they are protected by the election laws restricting the franchise to those who own property and pay direct taxes. Against them, however, the new laboring class is slowly rising, demanding universal suffrage for both sexes, the recognition of labor unions and the right to strike, and political freedom for democratic and socialist parties. It should now be apparent to the reader that Japan is to be regarded as a whirlpool of conflicting forces. Japanese politics can best be studied by scrutinizing these influences, these struggling classes. The future can best be judged by him who understands their positions and their relative strength. The forces to be considered in the subsequent chapters are eight:

The Emperor
The Genrō, or the Elder Statesmen
The Peers
The Bureaucrats
The Militarists
The Political Parties
The Capitalists
The Workers

CHAPTER II

THE EMPEROR

I

OBSCURITY, born of a tradition as old as man, surrounds the relation between the Emperor of Japan and his people. Few westerners understand the true position of the Mikado in the actual world of politics. In this chapter the writer will attempt to expound it to them.

The writer does not agree with those Japanese patriots who see fit to interpret the position of the Imperial Dynasty by a mixture of Japanese mythology and pseudo-science. He prefers to consider this subject in the impartial light of history. In doing this he is, to some extent, risking the ire of some Japanese bureaucrats. But he believes it to be the duty of a scientific student to adhere to facts, not myths; and further, a careful study of the true position of the Emperor of Japan can reflect nothing but the utmost credit and honor upon the Imperial Dynasty. He writes, not as a hostile critic of Japanese traditions, but as a sincere admirer of the Imperial Japanese Dynasty.

II

Students of Japanese law hold two conflicting theories of the constitutional position of the Emperor.[1] The con-

[1] The conservative school of interpretation of the constitution was founded by Professor Yatsuka Hozumi, of the Imperial University of Tokio. In his book, *Kempō Teiyō* (*Outline of the Japanese Constitution*) his theories are expounded. When he died the leadership

servative group contends that the Emperor is an absolute ruler, wielding the powers of government without check, and considering nothing but his own Imperial will. The more progressive school declares that he rules not as an absolute monarch, but as the supreme representative of the nation, which is composed of the Emperor and the people. His power, they contend, is not absolute and personal, but constitutionally limited; and in exercising it he is bound to consider not his own Imperial will, but the needs of his nation.

Defendants of the conservative theory point out that the Emperor Meiji promulgated the constitution, in 1889, of his own free will, and not as concession to any popular demands. He made a set of rules for the guidance of his people and of his government as a schoolmaster makes rules for the control of his pupils; therefore it is not to be considered that the Emperor is restricted by a constitution of his own making.

The leading defender of this theory was Prince Itō, who had been sent abroad by the Emperor Meiji to study the political ideas of the West, and who, upon his return, was the chief draftsman of the constitution. His followers, including many professors of constitutional law in the Japanese universities, were passionate in their enthusiasm for the theory of Imperial absolutism, and some of them went so far as to denounce as traitors the scholars who agreed with the political parties in opposing this. Prince Itō, in his book *A Commentary upon the Constitution of the*

of this school fell to Professor Shinkichi Uyesugi, also of Tokio. The opposition is led by Professor Tatsukichi Minobe, of the same institution, who is the leader of the liberal school of interpretation. Professors Sasaki and Ichimura, of the Imperial University of Kyoto, are followers of Minobe. Space does not permit an elaborate statement of their positions here. They have all written textbooks, to which the interested reader is referred.

Empire of Japan, which has been translated into English, fully expressed his views on this subject.

The theory is based chiefly on Articles I and III of the constitution. Article I reads "The Empire of Japan shall be reigned over and governed by a line of Emperors unbroken for ages eternal." The substance of Article III is: "The Emperor is sacred and inviolable."

It is hardly scientific to interpret a document in the light of two or three articles only, and the writer is convinced that a consideration of the constitution in its entirety will refute Prince Itō and his followers. Let us examine the first chapter of the constitution, in which the powers of the Emperor are defined. To him is given legislative and executive authority in sanctioning and promulgating laws and ordinances, in convoking and dissolving the Imperial Diet, in determining the organization of the different branches of the administration and the salaries of civil and military officers, and in the appointment and dismissal of the officers; supreme command of the army and navy; the right to declare war and conclude treaties of peace and to confer titles of nobility and other ranks of honor; and the ordering of amnesty, pardons, commutation or punishments, and rehabilitation.

If the Emperor is an absolute monarch, why should his powers be thus minutely defined? Why should not the constitution say "The Emperor shall rule Japan" and be done with it? Clearly the true intention of the constitution, whatever the metaphysical interpretations may be, is to limit the Imperial powers. Furthermore, the constitution provides that the Emperor alone cannot make laws. This right is reserved to the Imperial Diet, and to the Emperor is reserved simply the right of veto, which he has always refused to exercise, showing that he himself does not uphold the theory of his absolutism.

Further proof is available. Let us examine Article LV of the constitution, which reads in effect, "Respective ministers of state shall give their advice to the Emperor, and be responsible for it. All laws, Imperial Ordinances and Imperial Rescripts of whatever kind that relate to the affairs of state require the countersignature of a minister of state."

Very few of the Japanese commentators on constitutional law heretofore have called attention to this article and explained its true meaning. Article LV makes the ministers of state, not the Emperor, the actual administrators of the Imperial power. In the original Japanese this article is somewhat vague—intentionally so—but its actual application to Japanese government is clear. Under it the Emperor leaves the real powers of government to the ministers who are required to assist him.

The conflict between these two theories bitterly raged for many years. The bureaucrats supported the principle of absolutism, for it gave them a cloak for their undemocratic rule; and they sternly suppressed the party leaders and the progressive professors who opposed them. But with time, the progressive element gained the supremacy, and now it is generally recognized that the Emperor is not an absolute ruler, but the supreme representative and organ of the nation.

III

Enough of legal disputation. Let us cease theorizing and turn to facts.

The incomplete records of Japanese history[1] in the ancient times indicate that the Emperor was then an absolute ruler.

[1] There is no reliable record of political and social conditions in ancient Japan. The *Nihon-gi* (720 A. D.) and *Kojiki* (712 A. D.), the titles of which may be roughly translated *Ancient Japanese*

Throughout this consideration the reader should bear in mind the fact that there has been only one Imperial Japanese Dynasty, and that the founder of that Dynasty is by tradition[1] the lineal ancestor of the entire Japanese nation.

The end of the absolute rule of the Emperor came with the establishment of the Kamakura shōgunate in 1192 A. D.[2] The General Minamoto Yoritomo, whose following was great, managed to dominate with his forces the entire nation. The Emperor thereupon appointed Minamoto the chief executive officer of the nation. The Minamoto family established its capital in Kamakura, and its chiefs were known as shōguns; and the Imperial Family confined itself in Kyōto, the holy city. The Emperors kept aloof from all matters of politics and government, and retained only the name of ruler. No one now disputes that the shōguns were the true rulers of the nation.

The shōgunate passed from one family to another, and finally in 1600 to the Tokugawas, who, as the writer has already explained, lost their power during the reign of the Emperor Meiji.

Chronicles, contain, for the most part, mythological matter similar to the myths of ancient Greece. Therefore, to get a true notion of the early periods historians must make a careful comparative study of the Chinese, Korean and Japanese histories.

[1] This tradition has been consistently promulgated by the ruling classes in order to preserve three important elements of Japanese culture: first, ancestor worship, second, the worship of the Imperial Family, and third, the rigid family system of the nation at large. Impartial historians agree, however, that the Japanese nation is composed of various tribes which came from many parts of the world, as conquerors or as refugees from shipwreck or other perils. They believe that the Imperial Family itself was founded by conquerors who came from some unknown land. But the old tradition, whatever its origin, has had tremendous influence, and he who understands it has made great progress toward an understanding of the Japanese people.

[2] Even before the Kamakura shōgunate there is no proof that the Emperor was an absolute ruler. Probably from the earliest times certain families of court nobles took to themselves the real power.

In the Meiji Restoration the Emperor was nominally restored to power, but as a matter of a fact the whip hand was kept by the nobles and bureaucrats, who took advantage of the Emperor to establish themselves.[1] The Emperor Meiji then issued a series of edicts "emancipating the Japanese people,"[2] and placing himself once more at their head. But behind the edicts were the samurai, to whom the Emperor, seeing the requirements of the situation, was pleased to give the chief administrative power.

Under the constitution the Emperor remains aloof, while the bureaucrats and the parties struggle for control.

IV

It has ever been the principle of the Imperial Japanese Dynasty to rule according to the wishes of the people.

[1] The Emperor Meiji was really a man of unusual intelligence, courage and statesmanship. But when he ascended the throne he was only sixteen years old. Therefore it is not surprising that the restoration was initiated not by him but by forces outside of the Imperial Court —the daimyō and samurai.

[2] One of these edicts reads:

1. Assemblies shall be called into being in which all classes of the people shall be represented. All affairs of state shall be therein discussed and public opinion will thus find expression.

2. In future all distinction between the upper and lower classes of the people shall as far as possible be removed for the purpose of securing the order and peace of the Empire.

3. Every individual, the highest officer of the state as well as the most insignificant man of the people, shall strive to do his work well and not neglect his special calling.

4. Old-fashioned and useless manners and customs shall be banned, and efforts made to guide the people in right directions.

5. Knowledge from all parts of the world shall be made use of for rendering the state strong and secure.

Some observers believe that this "Imperial Oath" was promulgated merely to end the jealousies between the clans, and that it was written by some politician with that end in view. The progressive element in Japan places great faith in the document, considering it a sort of Bill of Rights.

The Emperor is not a representative of any class, but of the entire nation. He is the father of the people, and their natural protector. Those classes which in the past have ruled the state have thereby violated the sanctity of the Imperial line, and have taken advantage of the goodness of the Emperor to advance their own ends.

The idea of the Emperor as their well-wisher and protector is deeply impressed upon the minds of the Japanese people by tradition. They love to recite the poems of the Emperor Nintoku, in which the Mikado declares his love for his subjects and his desire to be one with them; and they often repeat the story of the Emperor Daigo, who, one winter night, is said to have taken off his clothing and slept in the open, so that he could realize the suffering of the poor. The Emperor Meiji, like the traditional Nintoku, was a popular poet.

Even the boldest of the shōguns, who usurped the political power of the Emperor, could not treat him with anything but the greatest respect, for they feared the anger of the people, who loved him. The ruling classes of Japan have never dared flagrantly to disregard the welfare of the people, as have the Czars of Russia, for instance. They have always been forced to realize that the Emperor was the friend of the masses, and to trim their sails accordingly.

Japan will never see a revolution against the Emperor. Rebellion is not necessary. The coming of democracy would be pleasing to the Mikado, for it would be according to the traditions of his line, and an emancipated people would continue to revere him forever.[1]

[1] Many careful foreign observers believe that the Emperor will sooner or later occupy a position similar to that of the King of England. Native political scientists recognize this tendency to some extent.

CHAPTER III

The Genro

I

At the helm of the Japanese state since the Meiji Restoration has been an extra-constitutional council, the Genrō,[1] or the Elder Statesmen. The Genrō are former samurai of Chōshū and Satsuma, who distinguished themselves in the Restoration movement and in the establishment of the new government. Their brilliancy and experience in statesmanship guided the new Japan through the perplexities of its first years. For decades their power was paramount, and only in the past few years has it been even slightly dimmed.

II

The influence of the Genrō is primarily political, rather than social or economic. They are not powerful in capitalistic circles, although some of them are as wealthy as the lesser of the new millionaires. Although they are now peers of high rank,[2] it should not be supposed that their preeminence is primarily social. They have nothing to do with the religion of the people, which in the new Japan has been divorced from the state; and they are not concerned in the affairs of the Imperial Family, which is governed by the law of the Imperial Family and the resolutions of the

[1] The word "Genrō" means "old and distinguished statesman." The word "genkun" is often used in the same sense.

[2] Yamagata, Prince; Ito, Prince; Matsukata, Marquis; Inouye, Marquis; Oyama, Prince; Okuma, Marquis; Saionji, Prince.

Privy Council. The great power of the Genrō is exercised in political channels only.

Thus we have the extraordinary spectacle of a purely political entity, the most powerful in the state, which has nevertheless no place whatever in the national constitution. Search the voluminous body of the Japanese fundamental law, and you will nowhere find mention of the Elder Statesmen. This very fact has doubled the power of the Genrō, for it has left them legally responsible to no one. This state of affairs is certainly inconsistent with any theory of constitutional government.

The Genrō derive their power from their peculiar relations with the Emperor. In every national crisis, such as the fall of a cabinet, the Emperor summons the Genrō to the palace and asks their advice, which he invariably accepts. In every time of political stress, the nation directs its attention toward the Elder Statesmen rather than to any other political leaders. Journalists then gather at the Palace gate, and base their articles on the political situation upon the facial expressions of the Elder Statesmen as they leave the council chamber to which they have been summoned by the Emperor.

III

The Genrō, sitting thus as a council, are the most powerful of a group of four councils which, taken together, wield most of the power of the Japanese state. These four are the Genrō Council, the Privy Council, the Cabinet, and a newly created body, the Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs. The Imperial Family Council, composed of princes of the blood, might seem to a casual observer to be one of this group, but in accordance with tradition this body keeps itself strictly aloof from politics, and concerns itself only with matters directly concerning the Imperial Dynasty.

The Privy Council is a constitutional body[1] whose members are appointed by the Emperor for life. It is composed of men who have distinguished themselves in the national service as administrators, educators, admirals or generals. Its functions are advisory and it may be summoned by the Emperor for the consideration of any question he sees fit to put to it, dealing with, let us say for example, the ratification of a treaty or the issuance of an Imperial Ordinance. On paper the tasks of the Privy Council coincided very closely with the functions that have been exercised by the Genrō. In practice, however, the extra-constitutional council of the Elder Statesmen has drawn to it much more power than the strictly legal Privy Council.

The cabinet is composed of ministers of state, each of whom under the constitution is individually responsible to the throne.[2] There is no mention of the cabinet as a whole in the constitution, but its existence is legalized by an Imperial Ordinance known as the Cabinet Regulations,[3] in which its functions are rather generally and vaguely defined. The influence of the cabinet is far slighter than that of the Genrō for two reasons: first, the Genrō Council is irresponsible, but the cabinet can always be dissolved; second, the Genrō always recommend the prime minister, who in turn forms the cabinet, which is, therefore, in a very subordinate position.

The only political body in Japan which can effectively rival the Genrō in power is the Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs which was created in the third year of the World War. It was put under the direct control of the Emperor, and the Imperial Court was designated as its place of meet-

[1] The constitution, article LVI.

[2] The constitution, article LV.

[3] No. 135, 1889, amended by Imperial Ordinance No. 7, 1907.

ing. None below the rank of minister of state may be appointed to this council. Its members are now the premier, the present and former ministers of foreign affairs, the ministers of finance, army and navy, the most influential members of the Privy Council and of the House of Peers, and the leaders of the political parties in the House of Representatives. Like the council of Genrō, this body is extra-constitutional.[1] Its functions are broad and vague, and its power is great. In time, perhaps, it will supplant the council of Elder Statesmen as the paramount political body of the nation.

IV

At present, however, the Genrō are in control because they retain the power to recommend the prime minister. In nations with the two-party system of government, such as England, it is the tradition that upon the fall of a cabinet the leader of the legislative opposition succeeds the prime minister and forms the new government. In spite of the constant agitation of the political parties in Japan for the adoption of this system, it has not been established. Instead, the new premier is always chosen by the Emperor upon the advice of the Elder Statesmen, who are free to select whomever they choose. Until 1900 they always chose one of their own body, and every prime minister was also an Elder Statesman. Until the accession of the present premier, Mr. Hara, the Genrō always chose a member of the titled nobility. The statement of these facts epitomizes the power of the Genrō.

Likewise, in the determination of Japan's foreign policy, the Genrō in the past have been of paramount importance.

[1] This council was created by an Imperial Edict, not by an Imperial Ordinance. Students of the constitution had a hot controversy over the constitutionality of this Imperial Edict.

Under their wise and courageous diplomatic guidance, Japan has passed victoriously through three great wars. The Genrō planned the deadly blow which humbled China and won Japan a place among the nations, and they engineered the Russo-Japanese War and Japan's part in the World War, which have made their nation a first-class military power and a prime factor in world politics.

V

During the Meiji Restoration and immediately after its consummation the leading statesmen of Japan who might be called Genrō, although the title had not yet come into use, were Prince Sanjo, Prince Iwakura and Prince Tokudaiji, three court nobles, who were the immediate counsellors of the young emperor. They did not remain long without rivals, for the samurai of the influencial clans were not to be kept down. Of these the following soon came into prominence: Kido representing the Chōshū clan; Okubo and Saigō, the latter a great and popular general, respresenting the Satsuma clan; Okuma and Soyejima, representing the Hizen clan; and Itagaki, representing the Tosa clan.

Death forbade that these statesmen remain in power. General Saigō became implicated in a plot of his clansman to overthrow the government, and he was denounced as a traitor and forced to commit hara-kiri. Okubo was assassinated. The three princes, Sanjo, Iwakura and Tokudaiji as well as all the others except Okuma and Itagaki, soon died. Itagaki fell into obscurity, and Okuma went into retirement that lasted for nearly twenty years.

The places of these men were taken by five young men, knights of Chōshū, and Satsuma, who had been recognized throughout the restoration period as "men with a future." There were the men who guided Japan through the greater part of the Meiji period, and to whom the title

of Genrō most properly belongs. They were (to give them the noble titles which they ultimately won by their services to the state) Prince Yamagata, Princt Itō, Marquis Inouye, Prince Oyama and Marquis Matsukata. The first three were of Chōshū; the two latter of Satsuma. In origin, they were all humble. Ito came from the lowest class of samurai, and only Yamagata came from the higher class of samurai that borders upon the rank of noble. The other three came of the middle classes of samurai.

VI

Perhaps the outstanding figure is Prince Yamagata. He is the founder of Japanese militarism. Even today, in spite of his great age and physical feebleness, he is the leader of the military party and the fountain-head of Japanese conservatism.

Prince Yamagata's insight and organizing ability are responsible for the creation of the modern Japanese army. When the Meiji Restoration had been effected the chief military force of the nation was the palace guard, made up of the samurai of Chōshū, Satsuma and Tosa. Yamagata foresaw trouble if the military power were left in the hands of these samurai. He recalled the history of what is known as the Gen-Pei period, in the 12th Century A. D., when two rival military clans split the nation in two by their struggles for supremacy. Yamagata decided that Japan must have an army organized on western lines and based upon universal military service. He was strenuously opposed by most of the samurai of all clans, who in feudal days had monopolized the right to serve in the army, and particularly by General Saigō and his associates, who asserted that universal military service was impossible because the common people lacked the courage and the sense of honor which in the past had characterized the Japanese

soldier. To this Yamagata replied: "The modern army depends for success upon its organization, not upon the personality of the individual soldiers." He won his fight, and was authorized to organize the army.

His associate, Prince Itō, was the most brilliant intellectually of the five Genrō. He was a thorough student of western methods, and because of his knowledge he undertook the organization of the civil administration of new Japan. The drafting of the constitution was largely his work, and when the new governmental system was put into effect he became the first prime minister in 1885. The Emperor recognized his worth and held him in great esteem. When, in later years, Itō became resident general of Korea, the Emperor would make no important decision without his advice, and no great question of state could be settled until the Imperial messenger had gone from Tokyō to distant Seoul and brought back Itō's counsel. The people admired Itō because he had been instrumental in giving them their constitution, and also because in spite of his intimate association with the bureaucracy, he became in later life a supporter—at least in name—of the political parties, and was himself the founder of a party, the Seiyukai.

Marquis Inouye, a close friend of Itō, was a man of noble character. He did not seek nor win political advancement, but he always stood behind Itō. His specialty was finance and diplomacy, and he was largely instrumental in the unification of the metallic currency in Japan.

These three Chōshū men, Yamagata, Itō and Inouye, dominated the Genrō council and enhanced the position of their clan. In the struggle for domination Satsuma came out second best. Of the two Satsuma Genrō Marquis Matsukata was the most active. Like Inouye, he was a financial expert, and he put the nation on a gold basis in 1896. Prince Oyama, the other Elder Statesman, was a

man of great good-nature but comparatively little force. He usually supported the position taken by Prince Yamagata.

Admiral Kabayama, of the Satsuma clan, was a man of sufficient importance to be considered a sort of "vice-Genrō." He was influential in the establishment of the modern Japanese navy, and he won for the Satsuma clan a monopoly of most of the high naval offices, but unfortunately for his clan, he did not live long.

In time of peace there was considerable dissension among the Genrō, Satsuma clashing with Chōshū and, within the Chōshū ranks, Yamagata quarreling with Itō. But in time of war all internal conflicts ceased, and the Genrō acted as one man in defense of the nation. In the Russo-Japanese War Prince Yamagata was Chief of the General Staff. In the Manchurian Expeditionary Forces there were many generals of his own clan, but nevertheless he placed Prince Oyama, his rival of Satsuma, in command of the forces in the field.

In 1900 the title of Elder Statesmen was first applied to these men. Ostensibly they retired into the background, but as a matter of fact they retained their power. They still controlled the appointment of the premier, and the men they chose for that position were their heirs and remained under their direction. Katsura and Saionji, who alternated in the premiership between 1901 and 1912 were, respectively, the protégés of Yamagata and Itō. Admiral Yamamoto, once premier, was the protégé of the Satsuma Genro.

VI

Of the five great Genrō, only Yamagata and Matsukata are living today.[1] Others, who may be called "New

[1] Prince Yamagata is President of the Privy Council. Marquis Matsukata is the Keeper of the Privy Seal and the Lord Chamberlain.

Genrō" sit with them on the Genrō Council. They are Marquis Okuma, in origin a samurai of Hizen, who was among the leaders in the days before the rise of the great five, and who came forward again after hovering in the background for twenty years; and Marquis Saionji, the protégé of Prince Itō and the son of Prince Tokudaiji, one of the three court nobles whose names appear as leaders in the very first days of the Meiji era. These two have brought a measure of liberalism into the Genrō council. Saionji, despite his noble birth, was a radical in his youth; and Okuma in the days of his retirement learned at least enough liberalism to become a supporter of the party system. The influence of Saionji is largely responsible for the selection of the present premier, Mr. Hara, the first commoner to hold the office. This choice was strongly opposed by Prince Yamagata.

VIII

Despite the influence of Okuma and Saionji, the Genrō appear to the young minds among the Japanese as interfering parents appear to a newly married couple. The younger people realize that their elders mean well, but they think that they are dreadfully out of date. Therefore they think, "How can be get rid of the Genrō?"

They can wait until the conservative Elder Statesmen die, and they can encourage younger statesmen, who can be influenced by the power of public opinion or of the political parties, to take their places as Genrō.

With the strengthening of the political parties the power to choose the prime minister should naturally devolve upon the House of Representatives. If a two-party system, like that of England, could be established, the leader of the opposition party would always succeed a retiring prime minis-

ter, and one important function of the Genrō would be automatically disposed of.

In the Advisory Council on Foreign Affairs may be seen a successor to the Genrō in its second important function. Although this body was called into being by Count Terauchi, a creature of the Genrō, it is even now sufficiently powerful to be a rival of the council of the Elder Statesmen.

CHAPTER IV

The Peers

I

The Meiji Restoration formally put an end to the picturesque feudal aristocracy of Japan, and erected in its place a peerage based upon a combination of the old Chinese and the modern European systems. The old titles were abolished, and in their places were adopted the appellations Prince, Marquis, Count, Viscount and Baron.

II

The new aristocrats are of three kinds.

First, there are those who were formerly daimyō, the great lords who held fiefs of the shōguns. In compensation for the return of their fiefs to the Crown, the Emperor Meiji gave them peerages in 1884. There are several hundred nobles of this class in Japan to-day.

Second, there are the heirs of the old court nobles.[1] For a thousand years, while the shōguns ruled Japan, these nobles had been confined in Kyōto with the Imperial Family, concerning themselves with court ceremonies and with religion. They had much honor but no money nor political power. Their opportunity came with the movement for the Restoration, and they rose to the occasion with a campaign (which was almost successful) to restore the Em-

[1] Detailed information about the most influential families of court nobles may be found in J. H. Longford, *Japan of the Japanese*, 1912, ch. iv, pp. 60-68. *Cf. ibid.*, ch. v, for information about the daimyō.

peror to actual political power. They pleaded that the Imperial Dynasty had the divine right to rule, and they appealed to the loyalty of the nation. Although the military power of the clans finally won the struggle, the court nobles were clever enough to be in a position of vantage at its culmination. As a result they won places in the new peerage.

Third, there are the descendants of samurai, (and, later, heimin or commoners) who won distinction in the service of the nation, and whom the Emperor, after the fashion of modern European monarchs, rewarded with titles. Some of these are great diplomats, others are military leaders who distinguished themselves in the Sino-Japanese or Russo-Japanese War, and still others are multi-millionaires who developed the industry of the nation. It is noteworthy that few men who distinguished themselves as educators or as civilian administrators of domestic affairs have been rewarded by elevation to the peerage. Thus, Premier Hara, although he has been five times a cabinet member, is still a commoner. It is therefore apparent that in Japan a title, or the lack of one, is not an index of a man's power or ability.

The aristocrats of the third class are alone entitled to the designation "protocracy," which is applied by Professor Giddings to those who have won distinction through their own ability, rather than through birth.[1] Of nine hundred and thirty three [2] members of the titled nobility the majority are aristocrats by birth.

Many of those who are descended from the feudal

[1] "Pluralistic Behavior" in the *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. xxv, pp. 539-540, March, 1920.

[2] Korean Peers are excluded from this number. Prince 17, Marquis 38, Count 100, Viscount 380, Baron 398 (1916), *The Japan Year Book* (1919-20), p. 44.

daimyo are wealthy. Although they returned their fiefs at the close of the shōgunate, they managed to keep a large part of the land and forests of their estates. The value of the property has increased with the course of time, and many of these nobles, notably Prince Shimadsu, daimyō of Satsuma, Prince Mayeda, daimyo or Yechizen, and Marquis Nabeshima, daimyō of Hizen, are now millionaires. Although they no longer have authority over the people of the lands they formerly ruled, they still maintain elaborate country castles, and the peasants, bound by tradition, still respect them.

In contrast with the nobles of this class are those descended from the court nobles, who are poor. Many of these live no better than small tradesmen or artisans. The Emperor, as the head of the group which formerly gathered at Kyōto, gives them presents and helps them as much as possible, and moreover, an Imperial Family Ordinance[1] protects them from the loss of whatever property they may possess; but in spite of this they have never prospered financially. Those of the aristocracy who in the past thirty years have showed tendencies toward progressivism have invariably been of this class; for instance, the Princes Konoye, father and son, have both been ardent democrats. To escape the burden of their position some of these nobles have sought to renounce their titles, and others have resorted to the practice of marrying the daughters of millionaires.

The nobles of the third class—the "protocracy"—are, of course, well off. They are bureaucrats, politicians and captains of industry. These are the most aggressive and active of the aristocrats; second to them in activity are the

[1] Kazoku-rei (an Ordinance of Peerage), Imperial Family Ordinance, No. 2, 1907.

poor descendants of the court nobles; and the third are the former daimyō whose tendency is to favor reaction.

The aristocrats are wont to declare themselves "kohitsu-no hampei"—"protectors of the Dynasty." They are not so fond of this phrase now as they have been in former years, for the people are beginning to show violent resentment. Hatred for the aristocracy among the young generations is increasing because the nobles continue to hold themselves higher than the commoners, although within the commoners the old class distinctions, such as that between samurai and heimin, have completely disappeared. The newspapers have scarcely a good word to say for the aristocrats. "Protectors of the Dynasty indeed!" write the editors, "If they are the protectors, we suppose that the people are the enemies! No, the dynasty does not need such protectors. If it is attacked, the people themselves are quite capable of defending it."

III

Let us now consider the constitution of the House of Peers, the means whereby the aristocrats affect the politics of the nation. Article 43 of the Japanese constitution provides: "The House of Peers shall be composed of the members of the Imperial Family, of the orders of nobility, and of those persons thereto nominated by the Emperor." This is amplified in an Imperial Ordinance,[1] which provides that the House of Peers shall be made up of the following:

"First, princes of the blood; second, the princes and the marquises, all of whom shall sit by virtue of their rank when they shall have reached the age of twenty-five; third, counts, viscounts, and barons above the age of twenty-five who have been elected by the members of their respective orders, and

[1] Imperial Ordinance (Organization of the House of Peers) No. 11, 1889, amended by Imp. Ord. No. 58, 1905; No. 92, 1909, Art. 1-7.

whose number must not exceed one fifth of each order; fourth, persons above the age of thirty who have been nominated members by the Emperor for meritorious service to the state or for erudition; fifth, representatives of the fifteen highest taxpayers in each prefecture, to be nominated by the Emperor. The term of office of members of the third and fifth classes is seven years; of members of the first, second and fourth classes, life.

"The number of the non-titled members, consisting of persons directly nominated by the Emperor or nominated to represent prefectures shall not exceed the aggregate strength of the titled members."

Princes of the blood, abiding by the tradition which forbids them to participate in politics, never avail themselves of their right to sit in the House of Peers. Certain commentators on Japanese affairs, being ignorant of this fact, have declared that the House of Peers gives the Imperial Family a grip upon the politics of the nation. Nothing could be farther from the truth.[1]

The bulk of those who actually sit are in the third class; elected by the lower orders of nobility. These are practically all conservative in spirit. Few of them show very great brilliance, and they rarely take the initiative in the solution of the problems that come before them.

Since the titled members show little ability, the true leaders of the House are those of group four, appointed for "national service." The Emperor in making these appointments is invariably guided by the advice of the

[1] The princes of the blood must be carefully distinguished from the peers of the highest order, who are also known as princes. Most of the princes of the blood, by family tradition, become officers in the army or priests of important shrines. They often reach high rank in the army and the navy. Some of them have become chiefs of the general staff, but they never accept positions as minister of the army or the navy. Thus they keep out of politics.

prime minister, who makes the nominations for political reasons. The nominees are usually minor generals and admirals, university professors, under-secretaries of the government departments, and the like.[1] Whenever a cabinet is about to resign, the premier rewards his important underlings by recommending their appointment to the House of Peers. Since most of the cabinets of the past have been bureaucratic in tendency, this section of the House is now a stronghold of the bureacracy. But the recent party and quasi-party cabinets have followed the example of their predecessors in making these appointments, and have therefore carried the conflict between parties and bureaucrats into the enemy's territory. The fourth group in the House of Peers does most of the work of the chamber.[2] The fifth group is made up of forty or more country landowners, and is small and of little influence.

IV

Considerable opposition has arisen among the people to the constitutional provision which makes hereditary the right of the titled few to sit in the upper house of the Diet. It is declared that the transmission of political power from father to son violates the declaration of the Emperor

[1] In Japan there are two asylums to which old statesmen may be retired: the Privy Council and the House of Peers (as appointed members). Men who have served several terms in the cabinet are often appointed to the Privy Council, so that they can draw comfortable salaries and live in peace for the rest of their lives. Under-secretaries, minor generals and college professors are often appointed to the House of Peers. In making such appointments a premier has two purposes: to retire the appointee, and to add to the bureaucratic (or party) strength in the upper house. Young and ambitious men usually decline these appointments. Messrs. Tokonami and Hamaguchi, rising statesmen, have done so.

[2] An observer in the gallery of the upper house would see that the debates are carried on almost entirely by members of group four. Most of the peers descended from daimyō are mere rubber stamps.

Meiji that no small group should be permitted to monopolize the functions of government. It is further argued that although the first generation of aristocrats may be made up of men qualified to rule, there is no guarantee that their children will maintain the standard. Moreover, it is said, the nobles who enter political life at the age of twenty-five are too young and too ill-educated perform to properly their official duties.[1]

V

In all legislative matters the House of Peers has equal authority with the House of Representatives.[2] The only restriction on the powers of the upper house is the requirement that the government must first present its budget to the lower chamber.[3] The Peers have full power to amend a budget bill.[4]

As a matter of fact, the position of the House of Peers is much stronger than that of the lower house. A prime minister who quarrels with the House of Representatives can dissolve it and call a new election; but he can do no such thing with the House of Peers.[5] Every government must be extremely careful in handling the Peers, for without them no laws or budget bills can be passed. When a

[1] There is no legal minimum age for cabinet ministers but these positions have rarely fallen to men under forty, and never to men under thirty. Forty years is the minimum age for members of the Privy Council, and thirty for members of the House of Representatives and members of the House of Peers who are appointed by the Crown or elected by the taxpayers. Titled peers, however, may sit at the age of twenty-five. Theoretically, then, a peer of twenty-five is the intellectual equal of an ordinary man of thirty.

[2] The Constitution, Article 38.

[3] *Ibid.*, Article 65.

[4] *Ibid.*, Article 64.

[5] The Constitution, Articles 7 and 44.

minister makes an address in the upper house he always takes the attitude of a servant addressing his masters; when he appears in the other chamber he usually considers himself a master among servants.

It is always difficult to foresee what action the upper house will take on any political question.[1] It is not divided on factional lines except in group four, which is somewhat uncertainly split into bureacrats on the one hand and party men on the other. The nobles waver until the last before they make any decision. There is, however, one guide to their action; if the measure before them is a proposal of a bureaucratic government, they will probably pass it; if it is sponsored by a government of party men, they may possibly defeat it.

In fact, the tendency of the House of Peers to oppose the political parties has been quite marked, and has caused the downfall of every party government that has ever held office before the present Hara cabinet. When Itō was premier in 1900 for the fourth time he held his office as the representative of the Seiyukai, which he had recently founded. He appointed Mr. Hoshi, the Seiyukai whip in the House of Representatives, to a place in the cabinet, thereby annoying the House of Peers, which retaliated by defeating some of Itō's measures. The premier went to the Emperor for help, and had an Imperial Edict sent to the Peers urging that they support the Government, but to no avail. The upper house continued its course of opposition, and Itō was forced to resign in May, 1901.

Several years later a cabinet was formed by Saionji, also a Seiyukai man. Upon him also the House of Peers turned

[1] The writer has studied the proceedings of the House of Peers for many years, but he is still unable to discover a division in it along consistent lines. Skilled Japanese journalists are in the same predicament.

its guns, for, following the example of Itō, he appointed to the ministry Mr. Hara, who had succeeded Hoshi as the Seiyukai whip. Hara attempted to abolish the system of local government by counties, a reform that was opposed by the bureaucrats. Saionji survived this immediate crisis, but was overthrown after one year.

The Okuma cabinet, in 1916, had similar troubles. This government was supported by the Kenseikai. Count Okuma was sufficienty strong to survive a dissolution of the House of Representatives, and to successfully ignore the Oura case,[1] which involved a charge of bribery against his government. But in these two matters his opponents were merely the lower house and the public opinion of the nation. When he aroused the enmity of the House of Peers on a minor matter in connection with the sinking fund, he was compelled to resign.

Admiral Yamamoto was another prime minister who was forced out by the Peers in 1914 because he associated himself with a political party. His cabinet represented an alliance of the Satsuma clan with the Seiyukai. Yamamoto survived a public scandal in which it was shown that several high officers of the navy had received commissions from an English firm of shipbuilders, but he fell when his naval policy happened to displease the House of Peers.

VI

Because of these occurrences, it is asserted by some

[1] Viscount Kanetake Oura, Minister of Home Affairs in the Okuma cabinet, was discovered in an attempt to bribe, with cash, several members of the House of Representatives to vote for the bill to place two army divisions on garrison in Korea. The cabinet had made a political deal with Prince Yamagata, the militarist leader, previously binding itself to pass this bill. The bill was defeated, and an attempt was made to prosecute Oura, but his high position made it impossible to punish him. He was forced, however, to retire to private life.

students that the author of the constitution intended that the House of Peers exercise a veto power over legislation, for the benefit of the bureaucrats. The constitution apparently gives the veto power to the Emperor, say these students, but as a matter of fact it gives it to the Upper House. This view is slightly exaggerated, but it is to some extent justified by the facts, for in truth no bureaucratic government has ever been bothered by the House of Peers.

For these reasons the party system of government, unadulterated, is impossible under the Japanese constitution. The political parties might manage to fill group four in the upper house entirely with their men, but they still would be barred from power by the clause in the ordinances which provides that the non-titled members shall never exceed the titled members in number. Thus the success, so far, of the present Hara government is quite remarkable. Every member of the cabinet is a party man. Ten years ago this would have been impossible; it would have been necessary to include in the ministry at least three or four bureaucrats from the upper house. The fact that it can be done today shows that the upper house has become at least slightly more liberal. But the House of Peers may yet wreck the Hara cabinet. The premier has dared to dissolve the House of Representatives and defy the nation on the question of universal suffrage, but he trembles lest the nobles may overthrow him on some smaller issue.[1]

Such is the power of the aristocracy in Japan.

[1] In May, 1920, Mr. Hara selected Count Enkichi Oki from the upper house to fill a vacant position of his cabinet, minister of justice, and has fortified his position against possible attacks from the House of Peers.

CHAPTER V

THE BUREAUCRATS

I

DURING the entire Meiji Era (1868-1912), and part of the Taishō Era (1912-), the government of Japan was a pure bureacracy; that is, the power of government was in the hands of an official class, which held all the administrative offices. These bureaucrats were the ruling class, and all others were simply their tools. Even now the power of the bureaucrats has been broken only in part by the rise of the political parties. For years the government was the bureaucracy, and the bureaucracy was the government.

II

The modern class of bureaucrats is a continuation in time of a section of the feudal class of samurai. All the bureaucrats who leaped into power at the Meiji Restoration had been samurai of the powerful clans. They were able men, who built up the political fabric of the new Japan; and their continuance in power was due, first, to their ability, and second, to the fact that they had constructed a machine for their own perpetuation.

The Genrō, many of the present-day peers, the generals and the admirals are really part of the bureaucratic class. In this chapter we shall consider the bureaucratic class as a whole, avoiding, as far as possible, repetition of what has gone before.

The bureaucrats and the militarists were to the Japan of

the Meiji period what the two wings are to a bird. They were its support, and they co-operated in their great work. In times of peace they sometimes were out of harmony with each other, but in times of war they loyally preserved the national unity, and in their domestic conflicts with their common enemies, the political parties, they were united.

It is not fair to the bureaucrats to condemn them as destructive reactionaries. They did much good. In a period of transition someone must take the helm, and they were expert pilots. But the period of transition is now over.

III

Several peculiarities of the Japanese state have afforded great aid to the bureaucrats in their struggle to remain in power. One of their greatest strongholds is the House of Peers. Upon the promulgation of the constitution it became necessary for the bureaucrats to seek a stronghold in the legislative branch of the government. They turned to the House of Peers rather than to the House of Representatives, not because they wished to form an alliance with their hereditary rivals, the ex-daimyō and the court nobles, but because the traditions which hung over from the feudal period made the upper house at that time more influential, in the popular estimation, than the lower. It is probable that Itō, in drawing the constitution, foresaw this and therefore gave the House of Peers more power than the House of Representatives.

The Privy Council, which, because of its direct connection with the Emperor, can act as a sort of overseer to the cabinet, is another fortress of the bureaucracy. Even now there are no party men in the Privy Council. All its members are bureaucrats, samurai of the great clans, who always bear in mind the welfare of the clans and of the bureaucracy through which they exercise their power.

Therefore the Privy Council, functioning as overseer, is kind to a bureaucratic cabinet and unkind to a cabinet based wholly or in part upon the support of political parties.

The solidarity of the Chōshū and Satsuma clans is a third source of strength to the bureaucrats. In the feudal days the clans gained a strength which will endure for years. They developed a philosophy of their own, a doctrine sufficiently marked to win a place in the language under the name of hanbatsu, or "clanism." The clan system is still an integral part of Japanese society. A traveler in the rural districts soon finds that the natives speak their own peculiar clan dialect, and in some cases even wear a peculiar dress, which serves as a clan uniform.[1] A baby born into one of the two great clans is fortunate; he is destined to hold high office.

Not satisfied with these advantages, the bureaucrats have framed a civil service system which preserves them from attacks upon their power. No government office lower than that of cabinet minister can be filled by any but those who have passed the civil service examinations in their youth, entered the service as subordinate clerks, and grown up in harness.[2] This rule was invented by Itō in 1885, not as a harmful restriction, but as a means of preserving equality of opportunity in the civil service, but the bureaucrats under Yamagata turned it to their own advantage. They made it serve as a means of excluding party men from participation in the administration, for in Japan a man is not considered an influential party man until he has been elected by some

[1] Satsuma, which occupies the southwestern part of Kyūshū, is so completely isolated from the rest of Japan that it speaks a dialect scarcely intelligible to visitors from the mainland. This has not prevented the clan from playing a highly important part in Japanese politics.

[2] Imperial Ordinance (Civil Officer Appointment Ordinance) No. 251, 1913, amended by Imp. Ord. No. 10, 1918.

party to the House of Representatives, and men who have advanced so far in political life are hardly willing to take examinations and accept petty clerkships. In addition, the bureaucrats took advantage of this civil service system to instil into the heart of every young clerk a feeling of loyalty to the bureaucracy of which he was a part.[1] As a result of this system any cabinet minister not a bureaucrat found difficulty in getting the co-operation of the members of his department. This solidarity among officials is the essence of bureaucracy as a system of government.

IV

Over a long period of years the bureaucrats found themselves struggling against a growing tendency toward democracy. It will be interesting to follow the evolution of their method of combat, for conditions have changed since the early Meiji period, and methods have changed also.

In the days of their first accession to power, just after the surrender of the shōgun and daimyō in 1867, the bureaucrats suppressed their enemies with military power. They were a military class, being samurai, and the use of extreme severity was natural to them. Okubo, the first great leader of the bureaucrats, fought with the sword against General Saigō in 1877, and led a military expedition against General Yetō of Hizen, whom he conquered and executed in 1874.

With the suicide of Saigō in September, 1877 and the assassination of Okubo in May, 1878 the period of armed conflicts ended. The next outstanding bureaucrat was Itō, a gentler man. The officials whom he led sought to put their political enemies in jail, rather than lead armies against them. In this period European political ideas were intro-

[1] For detailed account of the civil service law and its coördination with the education system see Dr. McGovern's *Modern Japan, Its Political, Military and Industrial Organization.*

duced. Itō travelled abroad in 1882, and in Germany he saw Bismark accomplishing wonders by suppressing the socialists and expounding a theory of politics which made the state paramount. Itō saw that it was good, and used the same system in Japan, not neglecting to preach the theory of divine right and to treat as traitors to the Emperor all believers in democracy.

This period ended in 1889 with the promulgation of the constitution, the work of Itō's pen. In drafting it, Itō signed the death warrant of his method of oppressing the enemies of bureaucracy, for the constitution gave a legal color to the preaching of democracy because it provided for a House of Representatives. The bureaucrats could no longer say that their enemies were traitors.

They did not lack skill, however, in fighting their enemies of the lower house. They pressed to the utmost their autocratic interpretation of the constitution, declaring that since the Emperor has the sole right to appoint the ministers, the lower house has no right to criticise his choice. Bureaucratic premiers, repeating this theory, ignored votes of lack of confidence. The only recourse remaining to the House of Representatives was a direct petition to the Emperor to remove the offending official. As soon as the bureaucrats saw this coming they would dissolve the House and order a new election.

Many professors of the Imperial University who had studied in Germany upheld the bureaucratic theory of the constitution.[1] The advocates of democracy were not so

[1] For many years the law schools have been the predominating elements in the Japanese universities. Students in these schools are trained, not to become gentlemen, as in the British universities, nor to become able lawyers, as in the American law schools, but to pass the civil service examinations. They choose their courses and their professors to this end. The civil service examiners are usually university professors. Thus if the bureaucrats can control the professors, they can control the entire government service.

learned, and were easily vanquished in argument. None but graduates of the Imperial University were able to pass the higher civil service examinations, and the professors could force their theories upon the students by refusing graduation to those who did not agree with them.

The bureaucrats did not scruple to use bribery and coercion in further support of their cause. At this period the officials were the wealthiest class, and they easily succeeded in bribing members of the lower house and candidates for office. Then, too, by taking advantage of their control of the police, they could force the people in the local election districts to vote for the right man or suffer for insubordination.[1]

In spite of all this, the Japanese people clung to their idealism, and the political parties increased in influence. Prince Itō himself, seeing how difficult it had become to succeed in politics without the support of the parties, changed his views and became himself the founder of a party, the Seiyukai, in 1900.

This introduced a period of compromise between the bureaucrats and the parties. At this stage (the opening of the twentieth century) Prince Katsura, the protégé of Yamagata, was the chief leader of the bureaucrats. Although he was a general, Katsura was not intolerant of the parties, and he entered into an agreement with the Seiyukai whereby he alternated in the premiership with the Seiyukai leader, Marquis Saionji. The compromise was successful. At this period the party men sought to invade the field of

[1] Dr. Yatsuka Hozumi, of the Imperial University of Tokio, was of great assistance to the bureaucrats in suppressing liberalism. Doubtless he truly believed the doctrines he preached, for he was a man of high character, but his opposition to progressivism made him a target for the ridicule of liberal students to the day of his death. Followers of the bureaucratic doctrines held him in high esteem.

the bureaucracy by amending the civil service laws, but this the bureaucrats refused to permit. The ambition of the party men was satisfied by an alliance with the capitalists, just then rising to power. The bureaucrats permitted the alliance and even co-operated with the party men to the extent of granting government subsidies to the corporations of which the party men became directors.

Then came the death of the Emperor Meiji in 1912, and the succession of the Emperor Taishō. The bureaucrats at that time were forced temporarily into the background, and the parties took over the reins of government. This fact gave rise to the term Taishō Revolution, applied to the events of that period by some students, who consider that the death knell of the bureaucrats was then sounded. But as a matter of fact the bureaucrats soon recovered, when Count Terauchi, a protégé of Yamagata and a man completely without party affiliations, became premier in 1916. Then Terauchi was forced out in favor of Hara by the rice riots of 1918, the first proletarian uprising in the history of modern Japan. But still the bureaucrats lurk behind the scenes and at any moment they may appear again upon the stage.

V

We have seen the evolution of the methods used by the bureaucrats to deal with their enemies: first, military oppression; next, suppression by civil law; next, (in the first years of the constitution) subterfuge, bribery and political coercion; next, compromise; and finally, periodic retirement to the background in order to regain strength. Let us now go over the historical ground once more, placing the emphasis this time upon the personalities of the bureaucratic leaders, and their struggles with each other for supremacy.

In glancing over the record of the modern Japanese

bureaucracy it is possible to discern at each stage one outstanding figure. The relations of these successive leaders may then be described, and their stories linked together. Such a procedure is bound to be somewhat artificial, but it will increase the reader's understanding of the situation.

Toshimichi Okubo, a samurai of Satsuma, may fairly be said to have been the first outstanding bureaucrat. He was a genius in civil administration, cosmopolitan in spirit, loyal to the nation before the clan, kindly to those he liked and terrible to his enemies. He gathered about him the talented young men of the nation regardless of their clan connections. Ability, not birth, was his standard of value, and he became the patron of young Itō of Chōshū and Okuma of Hizen, although he was a Satsuma man. His ambition was to unite the nation.

The leading samurai of the Satsuma clan were then divided into two groups, one led by General Takamori Saigō and one by Okubo. Saigō's followers were intensely militaristic and feudalistic, thinking only of their class and the glory of their clan. They were looking for war, at home or abroad, so that they might show their prowess. The men of the Okubo group were broader in their outlook. They knew something about conditions in the rest of the world, and they realized some of the weaknesses of Japan. They were interested in civil organization rather than military prowess. This group at first was the weaker, and Saigō of Satsuma struggled with Kōin Kido of Chōshū for the leadership of the new Japan.

Okubo was at that time touring Europe and America as one of a commission headed by Prince Iwakura. They were the first Japanese to make such a tour. Okubo returned with an increased belief in the importance of civil rather than military matters, and he aroused great resentment among the militaristic samurai by the assertion that the heimin (commoners) were as good as they.

The struggle came to a climax on October, 1873, over the Korean problem. Saigō and his followers believed that Japan should then and there send an army to Korea and conquer the country, thereby showing the world what real warriors can do if they want to. Okubo advocated internal reform before embarking on any ambitious enterprises abroad. Okubo's opinion prevailed, and Saigō was forced to resign his post in the government. He sought to re-establish himself by force of arms, and rallying the young men of his clan about him, he led the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877. Okubo took the field against him at the head of the newly formed conscript army, organized according to modern methods, and in this first test of the new Japan against the old the samurai were hopelessly beaten. Half of the young men of Satsuma were killed, and Saigō committed harakiri.

Okubo's triumph was not long-lived. He was assassinated by a group of vengeful samurai in May 14th, 1878. But he had started the nation on the way toward a new era of unity. After the Satsuma Rebellion there was no more civil war.

At about the same time all of the old leaders, including Kido and Iwakura, died. Hirobumi Itō and Shigenobu Okuma, both very young men, struggled for the succession. In 1881 Okuma dropped out of the race, and left the field to his rival, whose brilliancy was already gaining recognition. The resignation of Okuma from the government marks the first differentiation of the statesmen of Japan into the two great camps, bureaucrats and party men. Okuma, in retirement, worked on the development of a political party, and Itō, in office, developed the powerful bureaucratic machine.

After a period of observation abroad Itō, as we have seen, drafted the new constitution, and under it became the first prime minister, then president of the Privy Council, and

then president of the House of Peers. Okuma and Itagaki, party leaders, protested in vain against this monopolization of the important offices.

Chōshū and Satsuma, the great clans which had overthrown the shōgun, continued to occupy the high places. Itō, a Chōshū man, very sensibly took into consideration the claims of the rival clan, and, as we have seen, by mutual agreement Chōshū was alternated in the premiership with Satsuma men until 1898. Satsuma, however, had been greatly depleted in numbers by the rebellion led by Saigō, and Chōshū won the great prizes by dint of numbers.

Then came the Sino-Japanese War (1894-5), and Japan became once more a military nation. When civil affairs were of paramount importance, none could rival Itō in influence. But with war came the opportunity of Yamagata, the arch-militarist, the genius of the army, who then became the active head of the bureaucracy. Hitherto he had been simply a soldier. Now, taking advantage of the patriotic spirit aroused by the war, he rose to the position of greatest power in the nation.

Yamagata himself did not remain long in a position of supremacy. But he ruled for years from the background (from his position as an Elder Statesman) placing his puppets in office. His first protégé was Prince Tarō Katsura, a brilliant general, a former samurai of Chōshū, who won his title of Prince in twenty years of public service. Yamagata made him premier in 1901 after overthrowing by intrigue the fourth Itō cabinet. Japan was still smarting under the intervention of Russia, Germany and France after the Sino-Japanese War, when the Powers revised the Treaty of Shimonoseki (October, 1895), and returned the Liao-tung Peninsula to China. Therefore the nation welcomed the intense militarism of Katsura and his patron.

Katsura, an extremely able man, finally grew so strong that he attempted to overthrow the influence of Yamagata and rule in his own right. He was emboldened to this step by his continuance in office throughout the Russo-Japanese War, (1904-5), when his jingoistic tendencies gained greater recognition than ever, and by the ease with which he manipulated Marquis Saionji, the leader of the Seiyukai, with whom he alternated in the premiership as a result of a compromise. Therefore he attempted to defy both the Seiyukai and Yamagata by the formation of the new political party, the Doshikai. He was not entirely unsuccessful, but his career was cut short by death in October 1913.

For a few years after the death of Katsura the bureaucratic influence was lessened. Quasi-party cabinets, under Admiral Yamamoto (1913-14) and Marquis Okuma (1914-16), leader of the Kenseikai, ruled the nation. But finally Okuma made a tactical blunder, and Yamagata, still lurking in the background, saw that the time was ripe to place another of his protégés in power. His new pupil was General Count Terauchi. Taking advantage of a quarrel between Seiyukai and Kenseikai, Yamagata made it possible for Terauchi, who had no party affiliations, to form a cabinet and to remain in office for two years (1916-18). Japan was then fighting on the side of the Allies, the enemies of militarism, but she herself was ruled by a militarist. Terauchi was not overthrown until 1918, when the rice riots and the intrigues of the Seiyukai, led by Hara, finally cast him from power.

From about 1895 to 1918, then, the arch-bureaucrat and the real ruler of Japan was Prince Yamagata. He still lives and intrigues, surviving both the older bureaucrats and the younger men, Katsura and Terauchi, whom he placed in office. The power of the bureaucrats to-day is bound up in him. When he dies, the last of the great Japanese bur-

eaucrats will have gone, and the resurrection of the old bureaucratic rule will have become considerably more difficult.

The death of Terauchi in 1919 has left Yamagata without a protégé of the first rank. The most likely candidate for that distinction is General Tanaka, who is, however, still too young to become prime minister. Meanwhile, the strongest men in the bureaucratic ranks are Baron Gotō, Viscount Kiyoura and Viscount Hirata, who are not direct followers of Yamagata but might possibly fall under his tutelage. All are waiting patiently for the inevitable downfall of the Hara cabinet.

Baron Gotō is the man who seems to be next in line for the political leadership of Japan. He was born a samurai of a small clan in the north of Japan. He was educated in Germany, and is a physician by profession. Although he has held office under the bureaucrats, and has always worked with them, he did not, like most of them, work out his entire career in the civil service. His bureaucratic color, therefore, is not quite pure.

Gotō's first important position was the command of the government hospital in Nagoya. He later was "discovered" by General Kodama, of Chōshū, who for a while was a contender for the leadership of the bureaucrats. Through Kodama's influence Gotō became the Governor of Formosa, an office which he filled with distinction, developing a model system of colonial administration. Later he distinguished himself as President of the South Manchurian Railway, the center of the Japanese colonization movement in Manchuria.

In the second Katsura cabinet (1908-1911) Gotō was minister of communications. Thereafter he held various cabinet offices and constantly increased in experience and influence. As Katsura's lieutenant he was one of the organizers of the Doshikai, working in rivalry with Viscount

Katō, now leader of the Kenseikai. When Katsura died Gotō left the party and rejoined the Yamagata forces. During the Terauchi administration (1916-1918) he was very powerful, earning the nickname of "vice-premier." He was the first minister of foreign affairs who had never passed the examination required for entrance into the diplomatic service.

He is now laying the foundation for future power. He has cultivated the friendship of Prince Yamagata and at the same time has flirted with the Seiyukai. In 1919 he traveled abroad, studying especially the labor movement. He is watching and waiting and deciding with whom he must cast his lot.

If Prince Yamagata lives on, Gotō will probably remain loyal to the bureaucracy. Yamagata's power is still supreme. When Yamagata dies, the day of prosperity for the bureaucrats will be ended and Gotō will enter the ranks of the political parties to carry his standard. The field is already well occupied by the Kenseikai and Seiyukai, and any attempt at invasion must be made boldly and skillfully. In this fact may be found an explanaation of Baron Gotō's extraordinary interest in the European and American labor movement. When Prince Yamagata dies, he may seek to rise to power on the flowing tide of the Japanese labor movement. He may form a labor party.

If Yamagata lives, Gotō's position is secure, for Yamagata will make him premier until General Tanaka can be groomed for the position. Whether Gotō can carry on a successful intrigue after Yamagata dies, remains for the future to tell.

CHAPTER VI

The Militarists [1]

I

From the ninth to the nineteenth century Japan was ruled by the sword. The power of the state was the military power. The ruling classes were the military classes. The shōgun ruled the lords because he could defeat them in battle. The daimyō ruled their territories by the power of the sword; and any samurai could slay at will any heimin (commoner). The samurai never travelled abroad unarmed.

Bushido,[2] the chivalry of the Japanese feudal period, was a code of militarism. To be sure, much sentimentality developed about it, and crude brutality was largely eliminated; but at the bottom was the sword, and nothing else. Bushido taught that the sword of the samurai was his honor, which was dearer to him than his life. The sword was a symbol of God.

[1] In this chaper, the writer has utilized some of the historical data on Japanese militarism and imperialism given in *Taishō-no-Seinen-to-Teikoku-no-Zento* (*The Young Men of the Taishō Era and the Future of Imperial Japan*) by Iichiro Tokudomi, published in Tokio, 1916. It is said that more than 24,000 copies of this book were sold in six months. It is considered by many to be one of the most penetrating and influential pieces of propaganda ever issued by the sympathizers with militarism in Japan. The present writer's views on Japanese militarism are, however, not at all influenced by the propagandist elements of the book.

[2] For a full account of the philosophy of Bushido, see Prof. Inazo Nitobe's *Bushido*. His interpretation of Bushido is somewhat different from the present writer's understanding of it.

For ten centuries the nation was engulfed in this tradition. What wonder that the Japanese to-day are inclined to be militaristic? It has been said that the militarism of Japan was imported from Germany. Japan was a military nation before she ever heard of Germany. What happened was this: the devotees of the old military spirit, seeking a means of expression in the modern world, saw the Prussian scheme of militarisation, found it good, and adapted it as far as possible to Japan.

II

Though the history of Japan thus reveals a sea of militarism, the sea is, of course, not entirely without islands. In the periods known as Nara (707-781 A. D.) and Hei-An (781—about 1158 A. D.) there flourished in Japan a civilization of the highest and most pacific type, imported and adapted from China. The arts flourished, and the rulers of the land were nobles who spent their days writing verse and their evenings in the contemplation of the moon and stars. Most of the great works of early Japanese art were produced in these early days.[1] But the military clans arose and overthrew these nobles. Throughout the years of militarism the spirit of those peaceful days flourished only in Kyōto, the court of the Emperor, where the nobles continued in retirement to practice the beautiful customs which had formerly prevailed throughout the land.

Besides Kyōto there was one other city where the sword was not supreme. This was Osaka, where the merchants, a class despised by the feudalists, maintained an almost free existence. Here the customs of feudalism were enforced only in name. Money, not the sword, was the ruling power. Though the daimyō hated the traders, they needed them,

[1] Those who visit the ancient cities of Nara and Kyōto can see relics of the ancient civilization of Japan.

for in Osaka was the only rice market in the country, and the surplus product of the land could be disposed of in no other place. This gave the merchants a weapon, which they used to preserve the spirit of independence.[1]

III

The Meiji revolution brought no essential change in this condition. Feudalism was overthrown, but by what? By the sword, in the hands of the Chōshū and Satsuma clans. Tokugawa Keiki, the last of the shōguns, surrendered his power only after he had been beaten in the field, at the battle of Aidzu-Kuwana in 1868. The statesmen of the Meiji era were fully aware of this. When the political parties demanded that Prince Yamagata surrender the power which he held, they claimed, in defiance of the constitution, Yamagata replied: "We won our power by the sword, and only by the sword can you take it from us."

Thus militarism carried its supremacy into the new era. It was opposed by two counter-influences: the influx of European thought, particularly that of England and America; and the ancient Chinese philosophy of non-resistance which the court nobles of Kyōto had fostered, and identified, as closely as they could, with the religion of loyalty to the Emperor. More powerful than these counter-influences were the forces favorable to militarism that were then brought to bear upon Japan. The later part of the nineteenth century was a period of militant nationalism throughout the world. The shōgun abdicated in 1867; Germany and Italy were nationalized, through war, in 1860-1870, and at the same time all Europe sounded the note of nationalism. Japan, as well as Germany and Italy, needed unification, and like them, she found that the best way to get it was through military organization.

[1] The populace is fond of ridiculing the feebleness of the Osaka regiment as a fighting unit.

War with China and later with Russia greatly intensified this spirit. Both struggles, to the Japanese people, were fights for existence. Japan saw enemies all about her. China, called the "sleeping lion," had for years been defiant and brutal to her small island neighbor, and in 1887 sailors from a Chinese fleet had visted Nagasaki, murdered police and citizens, ravished women, and retired unharmed. The memory of this made easy the task of the Japanese statesmen who wished to organize the military and naval power of their nation. At the same time Japan saw the European powers accomplishing the subjugation of Asia. Russia, strongly intrenched in Siberia, was moving on toward Manchuria and Korea. Britain, France and Germany were breaking the isolation of China. Then, after Japan had fought and defeated China, surprising the world by her prowess and avenging her wrongs, Russia, France and Germany intervened, and "advised" Japan to relinquish her conquests, leaving her only the island of Formosa and an indemnity. The powers thereupon utilized the humiliation of China, which had been effected by Japan, to gain extensive concessions for themselves. Russia took the Liao-tung Peninsula, the most prized bit of plunder that Japan had won.

Popular feeling, encouraged by the military leaders, was most intense. "We must defeat Russia," was taught in schools, sung by the popular musicians, used as a theme by writers. Then came revenge in the Russo-Japanese War. In the World War Japan was avenged on Germany, the second of the trio that had intervened. The taking of Tsing-tao, the concession that Germany had won from China after intervention, was actually hailed by many of the Japanese people as the redressing of an old but unforgotten wrong.

All this convinced the Japanese that they must defend

themselves by military power. The belief in military preparedness became almost universal. Even the liberals, the bitter opponents of the bureaucratic and militaristic statesmen, realized that Japan must go armed to keep her place in the world, and many of the socialists—of whom there are comparatively few altogether—cannot now accept that part of the radical doctrine that insists upon national disarmament.

The bureaucrats foster the military spirit, and use it to their own advantage, many of them, of course, sincerely believing that it is also to the advantage of Japan. They seek to make the spirit of loyalty to the Emperor coincide with the military spirit, and to represent the Mikado as a soldier-ruler, although, traditionally, he is quite the opposite. In their propaganda they emphasize the nationalistic and militaristic side of western civilization, and at the same time they make the most of the victories of the Japanese armies. They have militarized practically the entire nation, having put uniforms on the college and high-school students, the civil servants, and every organization they could reach. The only groups that have avoided their propaganda are some of the merchants of old Osaka, now grown to be powerful capitalists, and some of the young men of the nation who have studied the Anglo-Saxon philosophies or the individualism of Tolstoi and other Russians.[1]

IV

Certain peculiarities in the Japanese political system give the militarists a political power within the nation that is unheard of in any other country to-day.

[1] Russian novels, translated into Japanese, have been the means of conveying much Russian radical philosophy into Japan. The government, not perceiving the dangerous quality of fiction, has been careless in its censorship of these novels.

A Japanese Imperial Ordinance [1] provides that no man can be minister of war unless he is a general or a lieutenant-general, and no man can be minister of navy unless he is an admiral or a vice-admiral. Until the Yamamoto cabinet a few years ago none but generals and admirals in active service could hold these cabinet positions, and then, by dint of hard fighting on the part of the Seiyukai, the provision was liberalized only so far as to extend the privilege to officers on the reserve lists.

This, it will appear at once, is contrary to the democratic practice of cabinet government. In countries like France, England, and the United States, the ministers of the army and navy are always civilians, as a safeguard against militarism. But in Japan the makers of the Japanese constitution thought it proper to provide otherwise.

These Imperial Ordinances, supplemented by the rule that no army officer may affiliate with a political party, gives tremendous power to the militarist. It must be born in mind that until recently almost all the high officers of the navy were former samurai of Satsuma, all the high officers of the army were of Chōshū, and the leading officials of the bureaucracy were also of these clans.

Further, the ministers of the army and navy have, by Imperial Ordinance, direct access to the Emperor, and are therefore completely beyond the control of the prime minister.[2]

As a result of this provision, the administration of the army and the navy is entirely beyond the control of a

[1] Imperial Ordinance No. 314, 1908, amended by Imperial Ordinance No. 165, 1912, Article 26 (An Ordinance to Regulate the Department of the Army). Also Imperial Ordinance No. 194, 1900, amended by Imperial Ordinance No. 168, 1912, Article 17 (An Ordinance to Regulate the Navy Department).

[2] Imperial Ordinance No. 135, 1889, amended by Imp. Ord. No. 7, 1907, Article 7. (Cabinet Organization.)

cabinet dominated by the political parties. The ministers of the army and navy do not resign with a retiring premier, but continue in office in the cabinet of his successor. Their long tenure of office gives them experience beyond that of the newcomers in government, and it also makes possible the frequent choice of army and navy men for the office of prime minister, for it is the rule that a man must always serve in several cabinets before he may be asked to form a government.

The military clique does not hesitate to use the power bestowed upon it by these Imperial Ordinances as a club to force its will upon an unfriendly prime minister. If a premier quarrels with the minister of war or the minister of the navy he has not much chance of surviving unless he himself is an army or navy man. The military or naval colleagues of the revolting minister will always stand firmly behind him.

An understanding of these facts will make clear many of the complex intrigues with which Japanese politics is rife. Consider, for instance, the quarrel that wrecked the third Katsura cabinet. Before Saionji resigned in 1912 to give way to Katsura he formed an alliance with the Satsuma naval clique, and he induced Admiral Saitō, his minister of the navy, to resign with him. Katsura urged Saitō to remain, but to no avail. In vain the prime minister cast about among the admirals for a man who would serve him, but no one would accept the post. At last, in desperation, he went to the Emperor, whom he persuaded to issue an imperial edict ordering Saitō to serve. Saitō, of course, could not refuse this. Katsura therefore won his minister of the navy, but in doing so, he sacrificed his own political future, for the utilization of an Imperial Edict in so shameless a manner is not tolerated in Japan.[1] Katsura soon fell,

[1] R. Uzaki, "The Past, Present and Future of Japanese Militarism" in the *Chugai-Shinron* (a political monthly), vol. iii, no. 1 (1919), pp. 8-9. W. W. McLaren, *A Political History of Japan*, p. 346.

and the naval clique succeeded in placing Admiral Yamamoto as his successor in 1913.

After Yamamoto had run his course, the enemies of the naval clique attempted to form a cabinet under Viscount Kiyoura in April, 1914. Every admiral refused to serve as minister of the navy in such a cabinet, and the attempt failed.[1]

Consider, again, the intrigue that wrecked the second Saionji cabinet in 1913. General Uyehara, the minister of war, demanded that two divisions be placed on garrison duty in Korea. Saionji was pledged to a policy of retrenchment, and found it impossible to accede to this demand. Accordingly, the general resigned, handing his resignation directly to the Throne, instead of giving it, according to custom, to the prime minister. No other general would take his place. Therefore nothing but resignation was left to Saionji.[2]

These examples make it plain that the generals or admirals, by virtue of the ordinances which make two vitally important cabinet posts independent of the prime minister, can wreck any cabinet they choose. This gives militarism a strangle-hold on the government of Japan. The present prime minister, Mr. Hara, although he is opposed to the militarists, can keep his power only by conciliating them. If General Tanaka, his minister of war and the protégé of the arch-militarist, Prince Yamagata, should quarrel with Hara and hand in his resignation, Hara would be forced out immediately.

[1] Iichiro Tokudomi, *Taisho-Seikyoku-Shiron* (*A Political History of the Taisho Era*), pp. 231-2.

[2] W. W. McLaren, *op. cit.*, pp. 344-5.

V

The militarization of the Meiji government in recent years was accomplished largely by one group of men: the high army officers who have come from the Chōshū clan. The navy, whose higher command is monopolized by Satsuma, has given the nation only one eminent statesman, Admiral Yamamoto. But the Chōshū army has developed three great generals who also have been statesmen;—Yamagata, Katsura and Terauchi. Among them, two have occupied the premiership during a large portion of the Meiji era, and one in the Taisho era. The Yamamoto cabinet, it must be noted, lasted only one year.[1]

It might be expected, since Japan is naturally a sea power, that if any warlike group were to dominate the national politics it would be the navy rather than the army. It has not so developed however, for two main reasons: first, the early strength of Satsuma was impaired by the death of most of the ablest men of the clan, and second, military arrogance and clan feeling is not so intense in Satsuma as in Chōshū.

The strength of Chōshū arises largely from the organization of the Japanese army, which places practically complete control in the hands of two men: the minister of war and the chief of the general staff. Chōshū has always managed either to fill these positions with its men, or to capture all the positions slightly subordinate to these, so that the underlings could dominate the chief. Clan loyalty is extremely intense in Chōshū, and for this reason Chōshū domination has been complete.

When Chōshū lacks sufficient capable men in its own ranks, it has the faculty of taking outsiders and assimilating

[1] R. Uzaki, *op. cit.*, p. 4, and his book *Cho-no-Rikugun-Oyobi-Satsu-no-Kaigun* (*The Chōshū Army and the Satsuma Navy*).

them so that they completely reflect the Chōshū point of view. This it did with General Oka, a man of a minor clan, who became minister of war in the Okuma Cabinet, and with General Uyehara, who, though a Satsuma man by birth, wrecked the third Saionji Cabinet in the interests of Chōshū militarism.[1]

VI

In the earliest days of Meiji, Satsuma shared with Chōshū the positions of high rank in the army. Indeed, for a few years Satsuma held the higher place, for General Saigō, a Satsuma man, was the military hero of the Restoration movement. Okubo, the bureaucratic leader, was of the same clan. These two leaders, by fighting each other, destroyed the influence of Satsuma in 1877.

The samurai of Satsuma, who formed the clan army, followed Saigō almost to a man. Therefore, Okubo turned for aid to the Chōshū army, then numerically weaker than that of its rival clan. Yamagata, even in those early days an eminent Chōshū general, devised in 1873, the plan of universal military service based on a conscript army of heimin, and Okubo defeated the samurai of Satsuma. Let me remark, parenthetically, in justice to these leaders, that the general welfare of the nation was one of the motives for their adoption of universal military service. But the desire to defeat Satsuma was another.

The military struggle came to a climax, as has been said before, in the Satsuma Rebellion of 1877, which was in a measure instigated by the Chōshū army. The revolt ruined Satsuma. The younger samurai of the clan followed General Saigō, and were killed; the older, wiser men balked at treason and sided with Okubo. Among the former group were Shinowara, Kirino and Murata; and among the latter,

[1] R. Uzaki, *op. cit.*

were Kuroda, Lieut.-Gen. Saigō, Maj. General Oyama, the Nodzu brothers, and Admirals Takashima and Kabayama.

In the period that followed, during which the militarists were not active politically, the supremacy of Satsuma continued. The political leaders were Okubo and Itō, who were interested chiefly in civil affairs. The ministers of war and of the navy were mostly Satsuma men. Oyama, Takashima, Tyudō Saigō and the chief of the general staff, Sōroku Kawakami, the most brilliant soldier Japan has ever produced, were of that clan. Kawakami, like most of the Satsuma leaders, did not choose his subordinates from among his clan mates only, but he sought any one with ability, whatever his origin.

The Sino-Japanese War (1874-1875) provided further opportunity for the Satsuma military leaders to win glory. But shortly after the war, most of them, as if by a sudden epidemic, died, leaving no successors in their own clan. This left Yamagata in a position of vantage, and gave him an opportunity to become the grand military leader of the nation.

Yamagata exploited the military spirit of the nation, which had been greatly aroused by the war and the three-power intervention after the Treaty of Shimonoseki, to increase his own influence. He expanded the army, and in the high places he placed Chōshū men, whose loyalty to him he could trust. The generous policy of Kawakami, now dead, made his task easier, for he found no solid Satsuma group to oppose him.[1]

For years thereafter, the post of Minister of War was held by Katsura (1898-1900), Kodama (1900-1901), and Terauchi (1902-1911). Of these, Katsura and Terauchi

[1] Yūzirō Miyake, *Who can Control the Japanese Militarists?* in the *Chūwō-Kōron* (a political monthly), Sept., 1918.

rose to the premiership. All three were of Chōshū, and loyal to Yamagata.

VII

In the meanwhile Satsuma, driven out of the army, was intrenching itself in the navy, which had grown since the restoration from a negligible position to one of great importance. The small significance of the navy in the earliest Meiji years is shown by the fact that at that time it was considered that to be an admiral required no special training, and men were often generals and admirals both. But now, especially since the Sino-Japanese War, in which the decisive battle was naval, and since the development of foreign commerce, the situation is different.

Tudō Saigō and Kabayama devoted themselves to the development of the growing navy, and they captured it for Satsuma. They passed the scepter down to Yamamoto, who was minister of navy for ten years, and who grew sufficiently important to become a rival of Katsura for political power.

Yamamoto won his premiership by an alliance with the Seiyukai in 1913. He was at first interested in the Kokumintō rather than any other party, but when Katsura formed the Doshikai of Kukumintō men he transferred his interest. The change was fortunate, and he was able to form a cabinet. While in office he struck a blow at Chōshū domination by widening the qualifications for ministers of the army and navy to include reserve officers. This struck a blow at the militarists of the army, because there were very few Chōshū men on the reserve list.

The naval scandal case of 1913 deprived Yamamoto of power and was a tremedous set-back to the rising political fortunes of Satsuma. The clan was further punished in May, 1914, by the removal from active service of Saitō and Takarabe, two of its most promising admirals.

Since the death of Terauchi in 1919, which was a great blow to Chōshū, the tide of power is flowing again toward Satsuma. The Seiyukai, which is now in a position of great influence, is in debt to Satsuma for the aid rendered during the Yamamoto cabinet. This debt Hara has already started to pay by giving to Admiral Saitō the desirable post of Governor of Korea. He has also restored Takarabe to active service, and given him an important command.

Thus the situation stands today. Tanaka, still young, is the hope of the army group, and Takarabe is the coming champion of Satsuma. Neither of these will have as great political opportunity as had the admirals and generals who went before them, for the rise of the parties has taken much power from the hands of the militarists.

CHAPTER VII

Political Parties

Part 1. Analytical

I

The formation of a cabinet in 1918 by Mr. Hara, a party man as free from association with the old-line bureaucrats as any politician in Japan, was hailed by many uncritical persons as a triumph of democracy. The present government is the first in the history of Japan to be formed exclusively of party men—with the exception, of course, in compliance with the Imperial Ordinances, of the ministers of the army and navy.[1] It came after a struggle of thirty years between the parties and the bureaucrats. The Japanese people still retain some of the enthusiasm they expressed when the cabinet came into power.

But their enthusiasm is misplaced. The parties do not represent the Japanese public. Least of all does the Seiyukai, of which Mr. Hara is the head.

The different parties represent three groups, the landowners, living on rent collected from tenants whose con-

[1] In comparing the Wai-Han cabinet (*cf. infra*, p. 91) with the present Hara government, which is a true triumph for the political parties, it must be borne in mind that Hara is a commoner and a member of the House, whereas Okuma and Itagaki were both peers and were connected with the House only as leaders of the parties in the legislature. Moreover Hara is backed by a thoroughly organized party, not by a hastily concocted coalition.

dition is only slightly better than in feudal days; the merchants and manufacturers of the cities who are sufficiently prosperous to pay the business tax; and the higher salaried classes, largely officials of the government or of corporations, who pay an income tax. The Seiyukai derives most of its support from the first group, and the Kenseikai from the second. All three groups may be termed the higher bourgeoisie. Unlike corresponding classes in Anglo-Saxon countries, they have no tradition of a fight for freedom, and they have no sympathy with the struggling masses. Their tradition, carried over from the days of the Tokugawas, when most of them or their fathers were samurai, gives them a sense of superiority over the common workers.[1]

The total electorate of Japan, under the law permitting only payers of large direct taxes to vote, is about 3,000,000. The population of the country is about 56,000,000 (excluding Korea). Until the election laws were slightly liberalized by the Seiyukai government about a year ago, the electorate was about two-thirds of that size.

So even a strictly party government, which commanded a large majority in the House of Representatives—a majority which, by the way, the Hara cabinet has not always enjoyed—would hardly be democratic.

There are many similarities between the party politicians and the bureaucratic politicians. Both are largely of the samurai class in origin. Neither group cares about the masses. The bureaucrats, in fact, in recent years have taken a keener interest in the welfare of the proletariat than have the party politicians. Like the English Conservatives, the opponents of the Liberal Party which represents

[1] Etsuziro Uyehara, *Democracy-to-Nihon-no-Kaizo* (*Democracy and the Reconstruction of Japan*), pp. 99-100; Putman Weale, *The Coming Struggles in Eastern Asia*, pp. 357-60.

industrial interests, they have begun to coquette with labor. The left wing of the Japanese House of Peers is more interested in social legislation than the " democrats " of the lower house.

There is this real difference between the bureaucrats and party men:—the bureaucrats preach benevolent despotism, declaring that the wise should rule and emphasizing the traditional authority of the emperor, while the political party men believe in the parliamentary system of government by elected representatives. But the party men do not desire to be representative of the entire people. They are champions of various minority group interests. It is possible that believers in a despotism may have the interest of the whole nation at heart, but the champions of a group will always oppose the other groups.

It is conceivable that the bureaucrats may in the near future support the movement for universal suffrage, for such an attitude would strengthen their arms against the parties. The parties, however, are not likely to support such a policy, for it is aimed against their propertied constituents. Ten years ago, when the Seiyukai had no influence in the cabinet, although it controlled the House of Representatives, it passed a resolution favoring universal suffrage; but today, when the party has actual power, it is on the other side. This party is democratic only when nothing more effective than a resolution is contemplated.

II

Party platforms in Japan mean nothing.[1] They are virtually all the same, varying neither between parties nor from election to election. Seiyukai, Kenseikai and Koku-

[1] Mr. Pooley's journalistic discussion of this point is suggestive and interesting. *Cf.* his book *Japan at the Cross-roads.*

mintō alike always declare in national elections that the "divine authority of the Emperor must be respected, the welfare of the nation depends on the prosperity of the Imperial Dynasty . . . . we must have ample preparedness for the national defense . . . . Japan must develop her industries." On national issues the platform declarations are never concrete. Mr. Hara is quite frank about it; he has often said, "My platform is a blank sheet of paper; I can write upon it what I will." The Kokumintō, which has only a few members in the house, sometimes violates this rule and puts forward some concrete proposal in its national election literature, but this is only a symptom of weakness.

In the local elections the party platforms are not quite as bad. They are at least concrete. But still there is little difference between the declarations of the different parties. They all alike advocate the construction of bridges, and railroads, or the improvement of harbors, undertakings which would be of advantage both to the landowners and to the commercial classes, and which might yield profitable contracts to the associates of the politicians, or even to the politicians themselves.

What slight difference may sometimes be detected among the declarations of the various parties is a matter of emphasis rather than of essential content. The Seiyukai places the stress upon policies favorable to the rural interests: the reduction of the land tax, the imposition of a high tariff on imported rice, the extension of railways in the rural districts. The Kenseikai gives more attention to the reduction of the business and income taxes, and the imposition of a tariff on manufactured products. The Kokumintō sometimes wanders into the field of idealism, advocating something that would be pleasing to the masses, but only because it need not put its ideals into effect.

III

Within the political parties there is no democracy. The aim of each party is power. To win power the *sine qua non* is a leader having prestige, sufficient to enable him to become a prime minister some day. To keep such a leader the party must obey him absolutely. Therefore the parties are usually one-man affairs. The decisions of the Seiyukai are made by Mr. Hara, with the assistance only of a council of some eight or nine Seiyukai leaders in the House of Representatives. The rest of the party just follow.

This has been true from the earliest days. When, at the beginning of the Meiji era, Itagaki formed the Jiyu-tō or Liberal Party and Okuma the Kaishin-tō or Progressive Party, these men were autocrats among the samurai of Hizen and Tosa that followed them in the party movement. Each maintained his rule as long as he had a chance to become prominent in the government. When Itagaki lost his prestige, his party went over in a body to his enemy, Prince Itō, who reformed it into the Seiyukai and, like his predecessor, ruled absolutely, for he was then the greatest man in the land. His successors, Matsuda, Saionji and Hara, have also been autocrats in the party. Okuma's Kaishin-tō (the name of which was later changed to Kokumintō) ran a similar course. As Okuma's chances for high governmental position seemed to wane, some of his opportunist followers broke away, and under the leadership of the militarist Katsura formed the Dōshikai. Katsura had an immediate road to power and that was all they cared about. They later returned to the banner of Okuma and were rewarded when, after Katsura's death, the old Kokumintō leader became premier. But that is neither here nor there. The point is, the parties are owned by their leaders: the Seiyukai by Hara, the Kenseikai by Viscount Kato, and the Kokumintō, now, by Inugai.

Thus the party government in vogue at present is not much of an improvement over bureaucratic government.

The present strength of the political parties is due, in a large degree, to nothing more than the dying off of the bureaucratic leaders. None remain to take up their work except those who have identified themselves with the parties. Few of the old bureaucrats have left heirs to carry on their work along the original lines. The ruling clans Chōshū and Satsuma, from whose ranks have come the bureaucratic leaders, no longer count among their young men statesmen of sufficient promise to receive the falling scepter. Therefore the power passes to their rivals among the parties.

In Chōshū, where once there were so many brilliant men, there now remains only the old Prince Yamagata, who still holds the reins of state. No member of the clan remains to succeed him but General Tanaka, who is minister of war in the Hara cabinet; but Tanaka is too young to become a great leader for some years. Yamagata's successful protégés, Prince Katsura and Count Terauchi, are both dead. The other great Chōshū Genrō, Prince Itō, chose his successors, Viscount M. Itō and Marquis K. Saionji, outside the Chōshū clan. Thus, unless General Tanaka displays extraordinary precocity, the day of Chōshū's greatness is nearly past.

In the Satsuma clan death has been even more severe. Early in the Meiji era, as a result of the Satsuma Rebellion Saigō and Okubo were lost to the clan. The greatest Satsuma man of recent years, Admiral Yamamoto, was ruined politically by the discovery, during his premiership, that he had failed to prevent a corrupt bargain with an

[1] Reikichi Kita, "The Present Conditions of Japanese Politics under the Dark Clouds" in the *Chuwo-Koron* (a political monthly), vol. xxxiii, no. 10 (Sept., 1918), pp. 1-11.

English shipbuilding concern in connection with naval construction contracts.[1] His former eminence was won by an alliance with the Seiyukai. The most successful Satsuma men of today are Baron Makino, (son of Okubo) who went with Marquis Saionji to the peace conference, and Mr. Tokonami, minister of home affairs in the Hara cabinet. Tokonami has joined the Seiyukai and Makino is also favorable to this party.

So it appears that the death of the bureaucrats of Chōshū and Satsuma has left the field to party men, most whom come of smaller clans. Hara, Katō, and Gotō, the great leaders of Japan today and tomorrow, are all of minor clans.

These party leaders entered the national service in the bureaucracy. In the early days of the Meiji era it was the general custom of samurai of the smaller clans to enter the civil service as clerks. When such men rose, they found that their origin kept them from becoming prominent cabinet members. Then they joined the political parties, which welcomed their administrative experience, for just at the time when these men began to rise, the parties were approaching a position of power which made it necessary for them to include within their ranks men with sufficient training to occupy important executive positions. Thus, Hara started his career as a petty clerk in the foreign office, rose as high as he could in the diplomatic service, and when he found the upper ranks blocked by Chōshū and Satsuma, joined the Seiyukai which Itō was forming just at that time.

Their early bureacratic training is reflected in the present attitude of these party leaders. The tendency toward one man rule in the parties may be partially explained by this.

[1] Iichiro Tokudomi, *Taisei-Seikyoku-Shiron* (A Political History of the Taisho Era), pp. 189-199.

Part II. Historical[1]

I

At the outset of the Meiji era there were three groups among the ruling classes of Japan whose needs, political and economic, were slighted by the new regime. They were the petty sumurai of all clans, whose jobs as retainers to the daimyo were destroyed by the revolution; the Gō-nō, or large landowners, not of the aristocracy, whose interests were impaired by the financial reforms of Meiji; and the important samurai of the minor clans, notably Hizen and Tosha, who were kept out of the high places by the men of Chōshū and Satsuma. These three groups formed political parties, by means of which they opposed the government.

The small samurai found their caste destroyed with the end of feudalism. Their position as professional soldiers was destroyed with the adoption of universal service, which placed all the people upon an equal footing with them. They saw the importance of the clans minimized. They saw the placing of civil ahead of military affairs by those who conducted the government.

Armed rebellion against the Meiji government was the first reaction of the petty samurai. Between 1874 and 1878 there were many bloody outbreaks, all unsuccessful. After the final attempt, the Satsuma rebellion led by Saigō, the samurai saw that they could not win, and looked about for other means. They learned something of the European theories of parliamentarism and found them suited to their end, for in a parliament there is a place for the opposition. Thus these reactionaries became progressives.

[1] For detailed historical accounts of the politics of the Meiji and Taisho eras, *cf.* W. W. McLaren, *A Political History of Japan*; Y. Uyehara, *The Political Development of Japan*; Iichiro Tokudomi, *Taisho-Seikyoku-Shiron* (*A Political History of the Taisho Era*).

The Gō-nō joined them in the movement. These were incensed at the new land laws, which, in addition to permitting private ownership and the free transfer of land, provided a taxation system more severe than that of former days. The feudal lords had exacted a portion of the land's product, paid in rice; the new government demanded payment in cash of three (later two and one-half) per cent. of the land's assessed value. The old taxes had been easy to evade, but the new government really collected nearly all that was due to it. The Gō-nō felt that the burden of the new financial policy fell unduly upon them and they also resented the new order on general principles. Therefore they were willing to join a movement against the Sat-chō group that ruled.

To these two groups were added the statesmen of Tosa and Hizen, who found themselves frozen out. These men—notably Itagaki, Gotō, Yetō and Soyezima—broke with the Sat-chō government on the Korean issue, as raised by Saigō. With Saigō, they resigned from the government when it was determined to postpone the invasion of Korea until the civil government of Japan had been reformed.

Then, on January 18, 1874, these three disaffected groups united in presenting to the government a memorandum asking the introduction of the parliamentary system of government. They complained, without much regard for logic, that the treatment of the samurai had been unfair, that the introduction of conscription was bad for the nation, that the new land tax and land law were objectionable, that the foreign policy of the government was too weak, and, finally, that all these ills were due to the absence of a parliament that could watch the government in the interests of a minority.

The drafter of the memorandum was Count Taisuke Itagaki, a samurai of Tosa, who in feudal days had been

one of the most important administrators of his clan, and had represented Tosa in the higher councils of the Meiji government. After his resignation on the Korean issue, and the drafting of the memorandum, he went home to his native city of Kōchi, and devoted himself to the political education of the young. Many promising students gathered about him to learn the democratic ideas of the West, and he taught them to admire the French doctrines. From this school as headquarters a far-reaching propaganda was conducted for the opening of a national parliament. Leagues were formed all over Japan and students were placed as editors of newspapers, so that a large proportion of the press was captured for the plan.

As a result of the propaganda, in which all the disaffected groups united, the Emperor in 1881 issued an edict promising that in ten years a parliament would be formed, and making it legal immediately to form political parties. Immediately Itagaki formed the Jiyu-tō or Liberal Party with himself as president.

The Jiyu-tō declaration of principles called for universal suffrage and a parliament. Some of the party members were open republicans. Yet the party advocated a firm, imperialistic foreign policy, for it needed the support of the small samurai. Such contradictions are the rule in Japanese politics.

At about the same time Shigenobu Okuma, later famous as Marquis Okuma, formed the Kaishin-tō or Progressive Party. Okuma was a samurai of Hizen and a thorough student of the West. Even before the time of Meiji he had studied with the Dutch settlers and American missionaries in Nagasaki. In the early Meiji movement he and Itō had been equally eminent, and with Yetō and Soyezima he represented Hizen in the higher governmental councils. Unlike the other founders of the political parties, he sided

against Saigō and with the Sat-cho bureaucrats on the Korean question, for as an admirer of western civilization he believed in civil reform rather than militarism. Also, he differed from most of the disaffected leaders in that he was an expert in financial reform, sharing with Inouye and Matsukata the glory of that work.

He was a true progressive, however, and he expressed his sympathy with the draft of the memorandum requesting a parliament. Still working in the bureaucratic governmen, he managed in 1875 to force the formation of a Genrō-in or Senate, and a Daishin-in or Supreme Court. This was the first attempt in Japan at anything like a separation of the governmental powers, along the lines of the traditional French and American theory. In the Genrō-in Okuma was the leader of the left wing, having with him such brilliant radical young men as Mr. Ozaki and Mr. Shimada, who are now party leaders. He led the opposition to Yamagata and Itō, who called him a dangerous radical.

The issue between the bureaucrats and Okuma was joined when the bureaucrats delivered at a small price to the samurai of Satsuma and Chōshū a huge development in Hokkaidō, the northern island of Japan, which the governmen had effected at heavy cost. Okuma attempted in vain to oppose this. The Sat-chō combination was too strong for him and he resigned from the government in 1881.

He then formed the Kaishin-tō, or the Progressive Party, which advocated a parliament of the Anglo-Saxon type, with limited manhood suffrage, which Britain was just then outgrowing. It declared in favor of a bicameral legislature, internal administrative improvements and no imperial expansion.

A third party called the Teisei-tō (Monarchical Party) was formed at this time by Mr. Maruyama and Mr.

Fukuchi, backed by the Sat-chō group. This faction does not belong to the true political party movement, which was anti-Sat-chō. The bureaucrats frequently carried the war into the enemies' territory by the organization of short-lived parties such as the Teisei-tō and also by the election to the Diet of "independents" whom they controlled.

Between the founding of the parties and the opening of the Diet under the constitution the anti-bureaucratic agitation was carried on exclusively through the newspapers. Itō, drawing his inspiration from Germany, attempted to suppress this by putting the editors in jail, but martyrdom only aided them.

II

At last, in 1890, the Diet opened. The Jiyu-tō, and Teisei-tō elected members to the House of Representatives. Yamagata was premier.

Thus to Yamagata, arch-bureaucrat and believer in a cabinet independent of the parliament, fell the task of defending the bureaucracy against the first attacks of the parties in the House of Representatives. The Jiyu-tō and Kaishin-tō combined against him and blocked his budget bill. Yamagata sent his lieutenant, Munemitsu Mutsu, among the Jiyu-tō members with a large slush fund, to see what could be accomplished by bribery. Overnight he bought outright the votes of twenty-eight members, but this was not enough. The others stood firm. In the end the premier was forced to modify his budget bill in order to get it passed. Then he resigned in May, 1891.

Matsukata then became premier with the support of Itō and Yamagata. When he found the parties combined against him, he dissolved the House of Representatives and ordered a new election. Shinagawa, his minister of home affairs, summoned the police commissioners of all prefec-

tures to Tokyō and instructed them to see that the two hostile parties were defeated. The police interfered in the voting and many were killed in riots, particularly in the cities of Hizen and Tosa. Nevertheless the Jiyu-tō and Kaishin-tō, combined, sent a majority to the Diet, and Shinagawa resigned in shame.

Not long afterwards Matsukata also resigned. Itō, his successor, tried a new method of suppressing the obstreperous parties. He prevailed upon the Emperor, in February, 1893, to issue an edict ordering the party leaders to adopt a conciliatory attitude. They obeyed, of course, and Itō triumphed. But in the next session they renewed their opposition.

Itō now saw that a fight to a finish was useless, and decided to compromise. He gave Itagaki, leader of the Tiyu-tō, an important place in his cabinet and thus won the support of that party. At this point, too, the Sino-Japanese war made necessary a truce in the internal political conflict.

After the war, Matsukata became premier again in September, 1896. Following the example of Itō, he compromised with a party. He flirted with the Kaishin-tō and gave Okuma a cabinet position. The opposition of the Tiyu-tō, which had a plurality though not a majority in the House, was not enough to embarrass him more than slightly.

Itō succeeded Matsukata in January, 1898, with the support of the Tiyu-tō. After five months, however, the party deserted him and for this and other reasons he resigned.

Then in July, 1898, the bureaucrats tried an experiment. They permitted the party leaders to form a cabinet. Okuma they made premier and Itagaki minister of home affairs, and the government was known as the Wai-Han, a combina-

tion of the initials of these two men. In the House of Representatives the Jiyu-tō and the Kaishin-tō (now known as the Shimpo-tō) consolidated under the name Kensei-tō. They did their best to get on without the bureaucrats and to open the way for party government, but they could not succeed. After five months, two groups in the Kensei-tō found that they could not get along together, and the scheme was wrecked.

Yamagata now resumed the premiership in November 1898. He could not resume his former complete antagonism to the parties. He chose as his allies the Jiyu-tō group of the Kensei-tō and made with them a bargain which did much to align the political parties in Japan on the side of the growing class of capitalists. He refused to permit the party men to participate in the work of the government and he maintained the rigid civil service rules which kept the administration in the hands of the machine bureaucrats; but he permitted the parties to participate in the graft associated with local improvements and with subsidies, and he tolerated connections between party leaders and favored industries.

At about this time, Prince Itō became restless. He found that Yamagata was getting the better of him in the struggle for the leadership of the bureaucracy and he began to lean in the direction of the parties. The Jiyu-tō group at the same period found itself without a leader who could possibly guide it to power, since Itagaki's political prestige had been ruined by the failure of the Wai-Han cabinet. The partyless leader and the leaderless party found each other, and the result was the Seiyukai, founded in August, 1900, with Prince Itō as its president. At the same time the Shimpo-tō element of the Kensei-tō transformed itself into the Kensei-hontō under Okuma.

Itō again succeeded Yamagata as premier in September,

1900, supported by his Seiyukai and opposed by the Kensei-hontō, which had a minority in the House. But he had offended the bureaucrats, and under the direction of Yamagata the House of Peers made war upon him. Once more Itō went to the Emperor for an edict in March, 1901. He got it; but twice is too often to do that, for no one in Japan approves the utilization for political purposes of influence at court. Itō soon resigned in May and never again became premier. He interested himself in diplomacy, travelled, and finally became president of the Privy Council. Although still nominally president of the Seiyukai, he no longer took an active interest in party affairs. He passed the sceptre to Saionji, his protégé, in July, 1903.

With the retirement of Itō into the background there began a long period of truce between the bureaucrats and the parties. Katsura, the follower of Yamagata, alternated in the premiership with Saionji, now a leader of the Seiyukai. The Kensei-hontō changed its name to Kokumintō, and remained an ineffectual minority, still under the leadership of Okuma. During this period came the Russo-Japanese War, bringing glory to Katsura, and profit to the Seiyukai men and their capitalist friends. In 1906, the Seiyukai for the first time formed a cabinet under its own leader, Saionji, dividing the portfolios between its own members and a few bureaucrats from the House of Peers.

In 1912, the year of the death of the Meiji Emperor, the Seiyukai-Katsura compromise was ended. The length of its rule made the Saionji party unpopular, and to regain its prestige the last Saionji cabinet adopted a policy of retrenchment. The press approved but the bureaucrats and militarists were wrathful. General Uyehara, minister of war, started trouble by proposing that two divisions be maintained in Korea. Since this would have been anything but economical, the cabinet rejected the proposal. Uyehara

thereupon resigned and none of his fellow generals would take his place. Unable to find a minister of war, Saionji resigned in December, 1912.

The Genrō, when it was summoned to the Imperial Court to choose a new premier, spent three weeks looking for an eligible man. Katsura was out of the running, for he had gone to the Imperial Iourt as grand chamberlain to the young Emperor. It is believed that Yamagata, fearing that his protégé was becoming a rival, secured his appointment to this post to put him out of the way. At last, however, Katsura found his way out of the intricacies of court ceremony, relinquished his post as chamberlain, and formed his third cabinet.

He now repudiated his compromise with the Seiyukai, and formed his cabinet entirely of bureaucrats. The Seiyukai, which had a majority in the House, enlisted in its support the newspaper sentiment that had been won by the last Saionji cabinet, and waged war upon the government.

Katsura thereupon turned to the failing Kokumintō for relief. This party, during the years of its obscurity, had been divided into two camps, idealistic and opportunist. The former, which cared less for immediate power than for principles, was led by Inugai; the latter by Oishi, Shimada and Takedomi. The opportunists, irritated at the failure of Count Okuma to get a place in the government, forced the old leader to resign. Katsura, knowing of this wrangle decided to take advantage of it, thinking to follow the example of Prince Itō, and form a political party of his own out of the ruins of an unsuccessful party. In a quick raid on the members of the Kokumintō, he gathered together about seventy of its men, all of the opportunist group, and called them the Dōshikai. But he had not Itō's success. The Seiyukai, fortified by a favorable press and public

opinion, attacked the Dōshikai from every angle. Katsura made a frantic effort to win men from the Seiyukai to his banner, but the majority party was too well organized.

The people, more interested in political affairs than ever before, and lashed by the newspapers, were furious at the intrigues of the bureaucratic premier. There was serious rioting. The clever politicians of the Seiyukai supplied a slogan: "Down with the clans, up with the constitution." Fifty-three days after the formation of the cabinet Katsura resigned his office.

It seemed for a while that a new era had come, and that democracy, in the form of the Seiyukai, would rule Japan. But the party was not equal to the occasion. In the last throes of his administration Katsura deprived the Seiyukai of its leader, Saionji, for he had persuaded the Emperor to issue an edict to Saionji to stop his party's opposition to the cabinet, and when Saionji found himself unable to obey he was in honor bound to consider himself a traitor, and to retire from public life. No other member of the party was qualified to form a cabinet.

The only man of prime-ministerial stature in the country was Admiral Yamamoto, a Satsuma navy man. To him, although he was one of the hated clan leaders, the Seiyukai turned, to the disappointment of the people who thought that democracy had come. A Satsuma-Seiyukai cabinet was formed, in February, 1913, with Yamamoto as premier. The idealistic element of the Seiyukai, led by Ozaki (who had been among the loudest shouters of "Down with the clans") bolted the party and formed a new group called the Seiyū Club.

Yamamoto lasted only one year. He liberalized the civil service laws to some extent, and extended the privilege of serving as ministers of the navy and army to reserve admirals and generals. His government was wrecked by the

"naval scandal," involving a crooked deal with a British shipbuilding firm, and by the opposition of the House of Peers, which rejected a bill for the expansion of the navy.

The Genrō had great difficulty in choosing the next premier. Katsura was dead. None of the Dōshikai was available. Viscount Kiyoura tried to form a bureaucratic government, but the opposition of the naval party, all of whom refused to serve on his cabinet, defeated his efforts. Count Okuma, eighty years old, president of Waseda University and active only as a contributor of political articles to the newspapers and magazines, was the only available man.

Okuma, most of whose ministers were chosen from the Dōshikai, was energetically opposed by the Seiyukai majority in the House of Representatives. He was forced to dissolve the Diet, and the elections resulted in his favor. The Seiyukai lost its majority, and the Dōshikai, the Seiyū Club and a third party consisting of Okuma's personal following united to form the Kenseikai, now the Seiyukai's chief rival. Katō and Osaki are the chief Kenseikai leaders.

Prince Yamagata looked askance at the rise of the Kenseikai. He opposed it vigorously and finally succeeded in overthrowing Okuma to make room for his protégé, General Count Terauchi.

Terauchi dissolved the Diet immediately after his accession to the premiership, before the Kenseikai, which dominated the House of Representatives, had a chance to pass a bill of lack of confidence in him. In the election which followed he used the usual methods of enforcing a victory for the government. For two years thereafter neither Kenseikai nor Seiyukai could command a majority in the House, and the premier played one against the other.

Terauchi remained in office until the rice riots of 1918, when public opinion made it necessary for him to resign.

He was succeeded by Hara, the present prime minister, who was chosen by a Genrō Council consisting of Yamagata, Matsukata, Okuma and Saionji. Saionji was the choice of the Council, but he declared that the position should be held by a younger man, and recommended Hara, who had been his successor in the leadership of the Seiyukai.

Throughout his administration Hara has been vigorously opposed by the Kenseikai. But the premier is too wily a politician for them. He intrigued with the Kokumintō and the Genrō, and succeeded in placing himself in a strong position. He pleased Yamagata by appointing as his minister of war General Tanaka, whom the old militarist is grooming for the place left vacant by Katsura and Terauchi.

He held the Kenseikai at bay by adroitly juggling the election law to the Seiyukai's advantage, then he watched his opportunity to dissolve the Diet and call a general election, which he knew he would win. After a preliminary skirmish with the opposition, in which he showed brilliant generalship, he brought the issue of universal suffrage to the fore, dissolved the Diet on that issue, and came out handsomely victorious in the election that followed.

The Kenseikai, weakened, is still hammering away at him. In July, 1920, Shimada, leader of the Opposition, brought charges that three ministers had turned official knowledge to personal use on the stock market, and succeeded only (after an uproarious session of the House) in having a vote of censure passed against himself. Hara now appears to be stronger than ever. His greatest danger is from the House of Peers, the traditional enemy of party government.

CHAPTER VIII

The Capitalists

I

The small area and dense population of Japan have forced her, in her modern economic development, to become an industrial rather than an agricultural power. This her people and government have realized from the first beginnings of that development. They have carried on the development of their nation along these lines so successfully that she seems about to become, at no very distant date, one of the greatest industrial powers of the world.

The bureaucratic rulers of Japan have had more than one reason for encouraging the growth of industrialism. In the first place, they saw that success in warfare depends upon the possession of modern munition factories, railway lines and ships; and accordingly they encouraged the growth of these industries under government auspices, maintaining strict governmental regulation. In addition, they saw the advantage of great industrial development for other than military reasons. The proximity of China, the greatest potential market and source of raw materials in the world, presented a great opportunity to Japan, they perceived. They adopted a policy of paternalism in order to develop an industrial Japan which might supplant the western nations as the economic exploiter of China. Since they would need cheap labor to accomplish this aim, they took care not to let their paternalism take the form of a too active movement to better the standard of living of the working class.

II

It is said by many that the center of Japanese life is no longer Tokyō but Osaka. This is largely true, for with the development of Japanese industrialism Osaka has grown more rapidly than Tokyō. The financial center of the nation is now Osaka. Party conventions are frequently held there. The nascent labor movement, an unwanted child of industrialism, has Osaka for its center.

This is in accordance with the historical position of Osaka, which has always been commercially important. Throughout the Tokugawa period this city, then known as Naniwadzu, was a free city, governed by no daimyō, and its merchants were little troubled by the arrogance of the samurai class. Here was the national rice market, whither all the daimyō of the land sent the surplus products of their fields. Even such distant daimyō as those of Tsugaru and Matsumaye, in the extreme north, sent ships laden with rice to Sakai, the seaport of Naniwadzu.

In the city was a form of merchant guild, called Zeniza, which acted as a sort of combination rice exchange and bank, lending money to needy daimyō who mortgaged their crops as security. Doing business with the Zeniza was a group of samurai called Kanjōgata (accountants) who were representatives in Osaka of the several clans. These gave themselves great airs in dealing with the merchants, their social inferiors, but they got the worse end of most of the business deals they consummated. Here the heads of the guild were the real powers, and the great daimyō were merely their clients.

With modern times, the great money-lending families of Osaka have become modern bankers. The houses of Kōnoike and Kashima, now millionaire financiers, are directly descended from the bankers of old Osaka.

In Yedo (now Tokyo) the Tokugawa capital, there was in feudal days a minor group of merchants. They did business on much the same system as their fellows in Osaka, but they were directly under the eyes of the shōgun, and therefore lacked independence. The Mitsui family, now millionaires, are of this group. In other cities, there were merchants, but they could not rise above their feudal rank, which was the lowest of the social order.

The foreign trade of Japan in feudal days was carried on entirely through the port of Nagasaki, the only harbor which the shōguns permitted to be used for this purpose. The only European people who had a share in this trade were the Dutch. Daimyō such as Shimadsu of Satsuma, Nabeshima of Hizen and Kuroda of Chikuzen sent their samurai to Nagasaki to deal with the foreigners. Thus they grew rich and formed the basis of the fortunes which they still enjoy.

III

When the Meiji era arrived all of the ruling classes escaped economic damage except the lower orders of samurai. The daimyō kept much of their fields and forests as their private property; the greater samurai, who were the true administrators in feudal days, became prominent government figures and could get whatever they wanted; but the lesser samurai found themselves in a bad way. With the abolition of feudalism they lost their posts as minor administrators for the daimyō. They knew no trades, and their dignity forbade them to learn. The government issued bonds and turned over the money to them in compensation for their losses, but the funds were insufficient.

To gain a livelihood these petty samurai turned to the development of industrialism. Financed by the govern-

ment, they went abroad to study industrial methods, and returned to apply their new knowledge at home. Those of Satsuma and Chōshū especially found it easy to get government backing for new corporations. The merchants of Osaka and Tokyō did not fail to join them and take part in the new movement, but it was the efforts of these smaller samurai, that carried Japan speedily and effectively into the industrial revolution only a few years after she had cast out feudalism.

At the same time there arose in the rural districts a new class of rich landowners. In feudal days there was in each village a shiōya or hereditary village president, of the farmer class, who acted as agent of the daimyō, gathering the rice tax and helping to govern the other farmers. He was privileged to wear a sword, and was a sort of sub-samurai. When the days of Meiji came these shiōya, like the daimyō and the greater samurai, come into the possession of the land. They are now known as Gō-nō, or country gentlemen. These, together with the descendants of many of the greater samurai, are the large landowners of to-day. They are the backbone of the Seiyukai party.

The wealthy landed aristocrats, of daimyō families, are economically in a similar position but form a separate social group.

The Meiji Restoration, like any other great conflict, required financiers on both sides. It is believed, although the fact has not been definitely established, that the Mitsui family of Tokyō financed the losing shōgunate, and that Kōnoike of Osaka backed the revolting daimyō.

IV

In considering the development of Japanese industrialism we must bear constantly in mind that the entire process was sponsored by the government. Industrialism in Europe

was developed by private enterprise and the government stepped in only with the development of dangerous monopoly; but it was not so in Japan. Here the government developed the industry, and then turned it over to private merchants, who reaped the profits. At the same time the government kept the control, though not the financial fruits, of every business of military importance. Government enterprise was necessary in order to get anything done, for the merchant class outside of Osaka and Tokyō was not equal to the task of economic reconstruction, and the lesser samurai had too much dignity and too little money to engage in business except as agents of the bureaucrats. In the early days of Meiji the only private enterprises were the Osaka banks. All else was operated by the government or heavily subsidized.

Under such circumstances there was necessarily a close connection between the business men and the bureaucrats. The way to get rich was to become the friend of some high officers in the government. Such friendships were frequent. For example, Marquis Inouye, the great Genrō and leader of financial reform, was an intimate of the Mitsui family. Marquis Okuma and the Iwasaki family, the steamship kings, are also closely associated. The connection between the government and big business in Japan is frankly admitted.

V

Let us briefly sketch the rise of some of Japan's great capitalists. Most spectacular, perhaps, has been the career of Iwasaki. Iwasaki Yatarō was a petty samurai of Tosa. He was accustomed to the ways of the sea, and when the Meiji era came he determined to seek his fortune in ships. He started with the purchase of a few ships, and by intrigue and business skill he developed into the greatest shipowner of the land. Early in his career he became the

friend of Marquis Okuma and Count Gotō, an association which was of great value to him, in his competition with Viscount Shinagawa, whom he overcame and whose power he absorbed after a period of deadly rivalry. He also found it valuable in his fight on another rival company which was later organized by the Seiyukai interests.

Many of the Japanese millionares have won their riches in war time. The Sino-Japanese war produced Fujita and Okura, who are now men of great wealth upon whom the title of baron has been confined. They started life as plain merchants, one in Tokyō and the other in Osaka. Then they found an opportunity to sell munitions to the government, and although the people clamored, they profited. The Russo-Japanese War brought wealth to Baron Furukawa, the copper king, to whom Premier Hara is legal adviser. The greatest beneficiary of the Great War was the Suzuki Company, with which Baron Gotō is associated, and which when the war broke out, had already made a fortune in the sugar business in Formosa, of which Gotō was governor. Mitsui, Iwasaki, Furukawa, Fujita, Okura, and Suzuki are the great capitalists of Japan. They control the industry of the nation.

VI

In the foregoing I have occasionally mentioned the close relations between the capitalists and the political parties in Japan. Let me explain these relations a little more in detail.

The Japanese political parties—the Seiyukai, the Kenseikai and the Kokumintō—are the organs of the rich. They are controlled absolutely by the industrial capitalists and the wealthy land owners. The rich peers, of course, are not interested in the parties. They have other means of political expression, described in Chapter IV.

When the great samurai of Chōshū and Satsuma seized, as bureaucrats, the great places of power in the nation, they left no place in the front ranks of politics for the parties. But they permitted the parties to compensate themselves by an alliance with the capitalists, whereby the party politicians gained much money. The parties did not at first agree to this bargain. They fought to amend the civil service rules and the regulations concerning the ministers of the army and navy which deprived them of political power, but they were beaten, and were forced to seek their development in the field of industrialism and by an alliance with capital, since they could not win an important place in the government. Thus party leaders became directors of such concerns as the South Manchurian Railway and the Nippon Yūsen Kaisha. The Seiyukai was the cleverest of the parties in utilizing this association with capitalism. To this is due the Seiyukai ascendency to-day.

The fundamental condition which makes the parties the organs of the rich is the Japanese election law. Only the rich are voters. To qualify for the franchise one must pay direct taxes of three yen annually. Only the propertied classes can take part in election. Therefore the parties care nothing for the propertyless masses.

There is still another bond between capital and the parties. The expense of operating a political party in Japan is even greater than in European countries or the United States. The party leaders have no jobs with which to reward their subordinates, for they have no control over the offices of government. Therefore the party workers must be rewarded with cash. The cost of every election is great, for many of the voters are purchasable. Elections are frequent, because the House of Representatives is often dissolved. Before the war it cost usually more than 20,000 yen to elect a man to the House of Representatives, and the

expense now is doubtless much greater, Each candidate, by custom, pays half of this expense, and the party pays the rest. When it is considered that there are four hundred members of the House to be elected every time the House is dissolved, it is easy to see that the parties need great sums of money. They can get them only from the capitalists.

The party politicians who are elected to the Diet have a still further need for an alliance with capital. The pay of a member of the Diet is small, and the expense of election is great. Therefore the Representatives find it convenient to combine business with politics, and to use their parties to make lucrative business connections, so that they may support themselves while serving their country.

VII

This alliance shows itself in the attitude of the parties on taxation. The direct taxes, payment of which is the qualification for voting, are the land tax, the income tax and the business tax. The Seiyukai, which is largely supported by the landowners, always fights for the reduction of the land tax. The Kenseikai, organ of the industrial capitalists in the cities, fights for the reduction of the business tax. The Kokuminto in its more powerful days, when it had much backing in the cities, used also to fight for the reduction of the income and business taxes. Now, since it has only a few members in the House and has little power, it can permit its principles to become slightly idealistic, and it talks about reducing the indirect taxes on consumption, which are paid by the non-voting masses. Neither of the powerful parties cares anything about these taxes, and if the Kokumintō returns to power it, too, will forget them.

The parties, moreover, are always willing to vote a large part of the budget for national defense. The capitalist shipbuilders and munitions makers profit by this. Usually

the budget provides that the expenses of preparedness be paid out of the consumption taxes, which are paid by the poor.

No party has ever been opposed to imperial expansion. The chief reason for this is the close relation between capitalism and imperialism: territorial expansion means profit, in which parties share. Moreover, the men of the lower classes get killed in war, and the parties are not concerned with them, for they do not vote. The parties originally took a militaristic attitude to counteract the charges of antipatriotism which were brought against them by the early bureaucrats; but they have since found more substantial reasons for jingoism. The old-fashioned militarists are satisfied with the glory of victory, but not so the party politicians. In Korea, the Seiyukai men have won places in the Oriental Colonization Company, which has many concessions in this colony, and in Manchuria, others of the same party have places in the railroad corporation.

The foreign policies of the pure militarists and the capitalistic imperialists differ in this, however: the former insist upon the extension of the imperial territories by force of arms, whereas the latter are satisfied with "peaceful penetration." Thus it is that the present Japanese government is willing to return the conquered territory in Shantung Province to China, provided it is permitted to keep the economic rights formerly held by Germany—and such other rights as can be extorted from China.

VIII

Thus it appears that the bureaucrats of Japan built up a modern industrial nation, and turned over the profits to the new capitalist class and its allies, the political parties. The two latter divide the fruits by bargains in the reduction of direct taxation in the increase of subsidies, and by the gift of

directorates in industrial concerns. The only weakness in the structure is the possibility of the awakening of labor. The Japanese industrial system was built in haste, and its erectors neglected the human element. The workers were nowhere considered. Suppose, now, that they should find themselves. The entire structure would be ruined and the industrial future of Japan would be wrecked. Japan's chance for the economic control of China would be no more.

CHAPTER IX

The Workers

I

The laboring masses of Japan, by reason of the traditions of feudalism which still influence them strongly, and even more by reason of the system of education which has been set up and operated by the bureaucrats, have no interest in politics and no understanding of its workings.

In feudal days the common man grew accustomed to feel himself subordinate to others. He was ruled by others, and he had nothing to do with government. The daimyō and his samurai, and over the daimyō the shōgun, took care of such things for him. He knew his duty to his lords, but no one had ever told him of his rights.

There was, indeed, no reason for the workingman of feudal days to interest himself in politics. Politics had nothing to do with industry. The business of every craftsman was carried on under the supervision of his craft guild, which regulated everything in minute detail, and which was independent of diamyō and samurai.

A glimpse at the organization of these craft guilds may help the reader to grasp the psychology of the feudal craftsman, which the modern worker has inherited.[1] Trades were passed from father to eldest son. If a master craftsman (Oyabun) had no son, or if his son was unable to

[1] *Cf.* Katayama, S., "The Japanese Laborer," *Asia*, vol. xx, pp. 31-5, Jan., 1920.

carry on the craft, he was required to adopt a boy, teach him the secrets of his skill, and bequeath to him his name and his business.

When the apprentice, who was always the son or the adopted son of the Oyabun, had learned something of the trade, he went into the world as a journeyman (Shokunin or Kobun). The journeyman could travel throughout Japan without paying for anything. Any Oyabun to whom he applied was required by the rules of the guild to give him work, food and shelter. When the journeyman wanted to move to another city, the Oyabun always gave him money for his traveling expenses. In return for his complete protection, the Kobun owed the Oyabun absolute obedience. The preservation of these master-and-servant relations was a matter of strict honor to both parties.

When the industrial revolution arrived in Japan less than half a century ago, the newly arisen master class impressed upon the workers that the old relations of Oyabun and Kobun had not been disturbed. The worker was still the journeyman, and must obey his master; the owner of the plant was still a master craftsman, and would protect his employes. This propaganda, coupled with the natural inertia of the Japanese, made the workers slow to awaken to the new conditions. It did not often occur to them that they should attempt to take part in politics. Their ignorance and indifference to matters of state were increased by the education they received during the Meiji era. This is true in spite of the fact that education was made compulsory, and that by the widespread use of the Kana (syllabic letters) illiteracy was reduced to a minimum.

The people were taught in the schools that the Emperor was the sole ruler of Japan, and that no other influence in politics was of any importance. The bureaucrats used the relation of Emperor-worship as a means of discouraging

participation in politics; for if the Emperor alone ruled, his rule was certainly good, and there was no use in trying to change things anyway, because the Emperor ruled by divine authority. The pupils in the higher classes were further taught that government, in general, was a matter to be left to the wise men, and that the people were better off if they did not interfere. The duties of subjects were taught at great length, but no mention was made of any rights that they might have. Likewise, no mention was made of such topics as representative government, political parties or elections.

Teachers for the public schools were trained in normal colleges which taught them humility, left them ignorant of all civics, and encouraged them to be conservative and to hate all political parties. The pay of teachers was small. Grammar school instructors were usually weak, poor men, who were willing to accept such lowly positions because the jobs were steady. Poor boys were encouraged to become teachers by the fact that the government would supply them with food while they went through normal school.

The administration of the primary schools was highly centralized. The high officials dictated the curriculum in minute detail, and controlled every moment of the school day. Such a thing as academic freedom was unknown.

II

Even if labor were to take any interest in politics, it would do labor no good, for only rich men can vote. No man who does not pay an annual direct tax of at least three yen has the franchise. This rules out most workers. Most of the farm workers are tenants, and therefore own no property and most of the industrial workers in the towns are not paid enough to enable them to accumulate property.

Those few voters who might be inclined to favor a labor

ticket, or to give a labor tinge to the policies of the existing political parties, are so scattered that their votes have no effect.

Moreover, any small farmers who have the right to vote are, by tradition, under the control of the Gō-nō of their district, the man who has inherited the authority of the village supervisor of feudal times. These men control their districts with discipline far stricter than that of the Tammany district leaders in New York.

The advance of the labor movement in Japan has been hampered by constant government opposition. Ever since the earliest days of Meiji the government has severely frowned on labor organizations of all kinds. In the early days none but socialists spoke for labor in Japan, and this prejudiced the chances of any more real labor movement which might have arisen later, for the government, feeling that socialism was a menace, proceeded to label as socialism every movement of any kind in the interests of the workers, and suppressed all alike. The government did not even distinguish between socialism and anarchism; both alike, it said, were traitorous doctrines. The leaders of all proletarian movements were prosecuted and the rank and file of their organizations frightened, so that the workers shunned organizations of any kind as dangerous.

The newspapers, which were mostly party organs, cared nothing for the labor movement, and helped the government to suppress it. Only in recent years has the labor question received any notice at all in the news or editorial columns. Even if the newspapers had printed anything about their situation it would have done the workers no good, for their long hours of labor left them no time to read, and the newspapers, which cost 3 sen a copy, on the average, were luxuries too expensive for their pockets.

III

In feudal days farming and fishing were the sole sources of wealth of Japan. The government took great interest in the welfare of the farming class, which was the highest of the heimin in the social scale. Even to-day the majority of the population tills the soil.

Although the external life of the Japanese farmer has been somewhat changed by the innovations of the Meiji Era, his inner life and his way of thinking is the same as it was in the feudal age. He is congenitally conservative, and his isolated life has aided that tendency. The tradition of loyalty to the Emperor is the dominant passion of his existence.

Universal military training increases this conservatism. The farm boys are the healthiest in the nation, and they are the backbone of the conscript army. The glory of Japan is deeply impressed upon the young man while he is in service, and his loyalty to things as they are is deepened. This loyalty pervades the entire farmer class.[1]

When industrialism developed in Japan many of these farmers began to move to the cities. The land was hard to work, the income of the peasant family was small, most of the desirable land in foreign countries were occupied by whites, who did not favor Japanese immigrants, and therefore the farmers could do nothing but go to the cities and become industrial workers. Industrialism, under government encouragement, grew tremendously, and the domestic system of manufacture gave way to the factory system. The relations of Oyabun and Kobun were no more; workers were simply employés and wage earners. The psychology of Japanese labor began to change.

[1] *Cf.* Mr. H. M. Hyndman, "Japan: Imperial and Capitalistic," *Asia*, vol. xix, pp. 24-6, Jan., 1919. This is a good account of the Japanese labor movement.

The wars which Japan fought in her period of growth always brought industrial expansion, but in each case prosperity was followed by a depression. The great depression which has followed the Great War, beginning in the spring of 1920, is a case in point. This see-saw aided the change in the psychology of the workers. In boom times the number and power of the rich increased, and the distinction between the capitalists and the working classes grew greater; in slack times the workers suffered and began to learn how to complain.

IV[1]

The Sino-Japanese war (1894-5) occasioned the first great forward stride in Japanese industrialism. Before the struggle the domestic system of manufacture clung to all industries except ship-building and munitions-making, but new factories sprung up like mushrooms over the entire nation. At the same time the first labor organization in Japan was formed;—a fraternal society of Japanese railway workers. It did not call itself a labor union, and it devoted itself largely to the provision of accident and unemployment insurance for its members. All Japanese labor organizations have pursued this course. There are no "labor unions" in Japan today; there are only "fraternal societies."

Also at the close of the Sino-Japanese War came the beginning of the Japanese socialist movement. A Society for the Study of Socialism was formed in Tokyō. At first not all the members of this organization were socialists, but as the years passed the non-socialists left it one by one. Among the members of the society were the well-known

[1] This account of the labor movement in the Meiji era is based largely upon Mr. S. Katayama's *Labor Movement in Japan* (1918). This small book by a Japanese socialist can be highly recommended.

Japanese radicals, Mr. Sen Katayama, now in exile in the United States, and Professor Isoo Abe of Waseda University.

In 1901 the first Japanese Social Democratic Party was founded by S. Katayama, I. Abe and K. K. Kawakami, who is now well known in the United States as a writer on Japanese affairs. The party was immediately dissolved by the bureaucratic government, which thereafter saw to it that no radicals or laborites were permitted to start political action.

The socialists then proceeded to spread their propaganda by means of secret societies. They saw that there was no hope for them in politics, and they were therefore driven to thoughts of direct action.

During the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5) these societies carried on an active pacifist agitation. They managed to publish a daily, which was constantly being suppressed. They got in touch with the Russian revolutionists, with whom they exchanged resolutions hoping that both sides would lose the war. They gained a number of converts in Japan, no doubt, but the opposition of the government and the loyalty of the population were too strong for them.

Shortly after the close of the war a group of anarchists and nihilists, led by Denjiro Kōtoku, attempted to assassinate the Emperor.[1] This outrageous act, which shocked the entire nation, caused the government to inaugurate a complete suppression of everything resembling socialism. All radical books were strictly suppressed and no one dared, thereafter, to call himself a socialist.

Independent of the puny socialist movement, however, the germs of a more truly proletarian movement were developing among the laborers of the cities. The unrest, which was—and still is, even to-day—chaotic and without

[1] Stellman, L. J., "Denziro Kōtoku, Revolutionist," *The Overland Weekly*, vol. lviii, pp. 287-90, Oct., 1911.

direction, took the form of a popular clamor against the government of the bureaucratic clans, Chōshū and Satsuma. Riots in Tokyō, especially in the last days of the Katsura regime, were frequent. This movement, was, of course, utilized by the political parties in their fight for the control of the government.

V

In August 1918, out of a clear sky came the first real uprising of the Japanese proletariat for proletarian ends: the rice riots. This outburst was the result of a tremendous rise in the cost of rice—the price tripled in less than two months—which was due, in turn, to under-production and to war-time speculation.

Throughout the summer of 1918 the Japanese masses suffered patiently while the price of their staple food went higher. The Terauchi cabinet, through its minister of agriculture and commerce, Mr. Ren Nakashōji, tried in vain to check profiteering and to lower the cost of living. Stories were printed in the newspapers of the great wealth and the reckless spending of the speculators. Popular feeling slowly became uncontrollable.

On August 3, a hundred fishermen's wives in the little northern village of Toyama got together and decided that they had had enough of this. They went in a body to the rice dealers, and asked them to reduce their prices. Some one told them that a train load of rice was about to be moved away from their village, and they immediately ran to the railroad, jumped frantically upon the tracks in front of the train, and cried for rice. They pillaged the rice shops and when their leaders were arrested, they swarmed around the police station and freed the prisoners. On August 5 and 6 the riots continued.

The news of the disorders in Toyama spread rapidly over

the nation. The people promptly reacted to the tidings, and the disorders spread to the large cities. In quiet Kyōto, where in feudal days the nobles of the Imperial Court practiced their lovely and peaceful arts, the people now raided the rice shops and demolished the police stations. In Kobe the trouble was most violent. The offices and warehouses of the great Suzuki Company, which the rioters believed had been guilty of profiteering, were burned. Rioting spread to Osaka, Nagoya, Hiroshima and Kure. Finally it reached Tokyō, and echoes of it were heard in Korea and Formosa. The police lost control completely, and the army was called out.[1]

Finally the Imperial Household, with a contribution of three million yen, started a fund for the relief of the sufferings of the poor. The capitalists of the nation contributed. With this fund the government opened shops, and, with the aid of soldiers and policemen as storekeepers, distributed rice among the people.

VI

The fury, extent and spontaneity of this uprising make it peculiarly significant. It was the first uprising against the rich that modern Japan has ever seen. Its great violence is largely due to the fundamental excitability of the Japanese, who lack discipline in public demonstration, and who are extremely susceptible to the suggestions of violence that make mobs dangerous.

The party politicians made it appear that the rioting was an expression of indignation against Terauchi and the bureaucratic government. They succeeded in getting themselves sufficiently believed to cause the downfall of the cabinet. This was the only immediate effect of the rioting.

[1] Weil, E. F., "The Land of Narikin and Rice Riots," *The World Outlook*, vol. v, pp. 18-9, Jan., 1919.

In the long run, however, it will doubtless appear that the riots did more than overthrow a cabinet. They demonstrated to the workers the effectiveness of mob action, and the futility of the government in the face of it. The workers have felt their power, and they know now that they can give battle to the police and the soldiers. The generosity of the rich men, who were quick to give money when the peace of the nation appeared to be in danger, may have suggested to many that riots among the dissatisfied poor would make the rich surrender.

Thus the workers have learned that although they can neither vote nor strike, they have a weapon. This is the dawn of an effective Japanese labor movement.

VII

Count Terauchi was succeeded by Mr. Hara, a commoner, who is an exceedingly clever politician. The new prime minister proceeded to ingratiate himself with the masses by eliminating a bit of pompous formality formerly practiced by members of the government in addressing the houses of the Diet. Formerly each minister invariably referred to himself as "This Imperial Minister." Mr. Hara and the individual members of his cabinet called themselves simply "I," and were greatly applauded therefor. The Seiyukai government also abolished the body-guard of uniformed police which had accompanied former premiers in their perambulations. Further, it lightened the restrictions on freedom of speech; and, apparently at the instance of the cabinet, the Imperial Household Department abolished the stoppage of street traffic and the lining up of school children whenever the Emperor moved about.

The subject of socialism may now, to some extent, be discussed in Japan. Shortly after the advent of Hara many translations of *Das Kapital,* which had been held in

abeyance because of the censorship, were published. Radical philosophers such as Bertrand Russell came to be freely discussed by the students, and idolized by many.

Labor questions were discussed in the House of Representatives for the first time in the history of the Diet. The number of "fraternal societies" of laboring men increased, for although Mr. Hara did not remove the restrictions on the formation of unions, he was lax in his execution of the restricting laws.

Labor unrest in Japan recently has been stimulated by the success of the Russian revolution and the manifest uneasiness of labor throughout the West. The people have taken full advantage of the relaxation of the restrictions on discussion, and socialism has been widely discussed in the newspapers and magazines. The International Labor Conference of 1919 in Washington, in which Japan showed fully as much interest as any other nation, has further increased the consciousness of her workers.

This unrest was counterbalanced by the prosperity brought by the war, much of which has vanished in the subsequent industrial depression. High wages and bonuses survived after the armistice, and helped to keep the worker satisfied. The farmers were kept happy by the increased return from their rice fields. Moreover, the government tried to do something for labor by undertaking, through labor bureaux of one sort or another, to improve industrial conditions. In response to pressure brought to bear at the International Labor Conference, the factory laws of the nation are to be revised.

CHAPTER X

Conclusion

I

There are two ways of theorizing about the state: you may consider it something static, capable of analysis once and for all; or you may regard it as dynamic, with aspect constantly shifting under the play of varying forces. The first way of theorizing is the metaphysical way, greatly beloved of political philosophers at the end of the nineteenth century. Students of that type believe that one can accurately determine who is the real ruler in a state—that sovereignty is a definite thing, assignable to one person or element in the community—and they divide States, according to the location of sovereignty, into monarchies, oligarchies and democracies. In point of logic, this way of theorizing is satisfactory. Its failure to tally with the facts does not make it the less logical.[1]

Looking thus at the state as a static thing, the Japanese professors of political science explained the government of Japan for the benefit of the people. Japan, they said, is an absolute monarchy. The Emperor is the sole head of the state. In him lies all sovereignty. This is the all-important fact, the cardinal principle of Japanese government.

The professors cited the legendary history of Japan, which says that the Sun Goddess sent her son, the ancestor of the Imperial Dynasty, to rule Japan forever. Feeling,

[1] *Cf.* Prof. Giddings' *The Responsible State*, chap. ii, 1918.

perhaps, that the legend was not sufficiently convincing, they quoted Article I of the constitution, which says that the Emperor is the sole head of the nation. They also quoted the constitution to show that the Emperor controls all three branches of the government, the executive, legislative and judicial; and they argued from this that to make the cabinet responsible to the Diet instead of to the Emperor would be against the spirit of the constitution.

It must be borne in mind that these theorists were satellites of the bureaucrats who ruled Japan in the name of the Emperor.

The extreme bureaucratic professors of constitutional law argued learnedly: "The constitution, rightly, says nothing of the rights of subjects. It is concerned merely with the powers of the sovereign. That part of the constitution which is interpreted by some as an exposition of the rights of the people is in reality only a section limiting the rights of the executive, which is under the control of the sovereign." And again "The Diet is not intended as a medium of representation of the people. It is an institution to help the Emperor to rule." Yet again: "Elections are not intended to make possible the choice of men who represent the people. The members of the Diet are responsible to the Emperor, not to those who elect them. The voters are merely helping the Emperor to choose his advisers."

The people placidly accepted this interpretation of their form of government. They did not see its failure to correspond with the facts, for they had been educated for 1,400 years in speculative Chinese philosophy, which is not concerned with facts. They did not see that it was unjust to them, for during the long feudal era they had been taught that dutiful submission was the fate of the masses, and that the rulers of Japan, from the Emperor to the lowest samurai, were their superiors forever. They reverenced

the Emperor with the worship of true religion, and the ruling classes took advantage of this to strengthen their own position.

The professors believed and taught this theory of government largely because they were speculative scholars, interested in logic. They had been hurriedly educated, in Germany for the most part, and they taught what they had learned from text-books there. For independent inquiry they had not the time. The students were not wholly injured by this. They learned to think abstractly—an acquisition not to be despised—and they also absorbed the poetic atmosphere of legend in which most of the professors teaching these theories were wrapped.

The attitude of the professors has been, in the opinion of the writer, unrelated to the facts. The state is a dynamic, changing thing. Although from a pedagogic viewpoint it may be advisable to look upon it as static, from a scientific viewpoint this is false.

Social and political forces in the state are constantly shifting, constantly differentiating and integrating. Viewed statistically, they seem always to tend to a norm, but that norm is constantly moving.

For this reason it is impossible for statesmen who make constitutions to fit the documents to the political systems with which they are concerned. A constitution is only a document, and it is never an accurate image of the forces which make up the shifting state. That is why, in describing the Japanese State, I have avoided as much as possible quotations from the constitution, and descriptions of the prescribed forms of government. The constitution of Japan is not a reflection of the Japanese state.

Prince Itō, the great political genius of the Meiji era, drafted the constitution as a means of adjusting the conflict between the forces that sought to rule Japan. His draft was a compromise between the ruling classes.

The theory of Itō's constitution places the Emperor at the head of the nation. But the law does not hint at direct rule. The Emperor is adored as the sovereign, but, like the King of England, he rules only through his advisers.

The Peers, under Itō's constitution, are the bulwarks which should save the state from too quick change. Itō gave them, in the upper house of the Diet, sufficient power to counteract any radical tendencies which, he foresaw, might develop among the minor clans in the early days of their power.

Nevertheless, Itō made the bureaucratic cabinet members independent of the politicians of the lower house, for he saw that experts, not orators, would be needed for the building of the new Japan. At the same time, by creating the House of Representatives he left room for the formation of political parties, without directly encouraging them.

Thus the constitution is a compromise between groups. As such it has been successful. But to learn how the state is really governed one must study not the constitution, but the state itself. Let us study the Japanese state in the light of the following two general propositions:

First: the achievement of political power is the result of a struggle among groups, each of which contends for its own interest, whether that interest be idealistic, materialistic, or a combination of the two. Usually the groups are engaged in the pursuit of power, although even in the rush of this pursuit the most materialistic of them must listen to the humanitarian voice of the people.

Second: no state is a democracy, in the sense that it is ruled by the whole people. A close scientific examination will reveal that every state is a protocracy. It is ruled by the capable. The capable will always lead. Their leadership may be hidden under varying forms of government: if the population is homogeneous in race and intellect, the

form of government will be democratic; if the people are heterogeneous, they are led by despots. But always they are led.

II

So much for preliminary theorizing. Let us now, in the light of this theory, pass in review the several forces which make up the Japanese state.

The Emperor

Strictly, the Emperor is not one of the political forces which we are considering. Both before and after the Meiji Restoration he has been outside of politics, worshipped by the people from afar, and has kept a godlike aloofness from the affairs of state. He is the center of Japanese culture and religion. To him all eyes are reverentially turned.

Beyond all doubt, the Emperor will maintain this position forever. Whatever political changes may take place, however the balance of power among the contending groups may be shifted, the Emperor will remain the supreme head of the state, worshipped by all, yet aloof from the actual affairs of government.

The Genrō

The Elder Statesmen—Itō, Yamagata, Inouye, Matsukata, Oyama, and later Okuma, Saionji and perhaps one or two others—have been the leaders of Japan since the early days of the Meiji era. Their rule, interrupted but never overthrown by incursions of other groups, has been an excellent example of protocracy, the rule of the capable. These men were all, except Saionji, humble samurai in origin, and they rose by their ability to the highest places in the land. Yamagata outshone all others in military

organizing ability, Inouye and Matsukata in financial genius, Itō and Okuma in home affairs and diplomacy, Saionji in diplomacy. These able men took the government in their own hands, at first as officials under the constitution, and later, when they retired from officialdom, as the extra-constitutional Genrō Council. Thus they showed that in the hands of able governors a constitution is only a piece of paper, and that protocrats will rule in spite of documents.

There has always been a struggle for supremacy within the Genrō. The group of the Elder Statesmen, like the nation, has been divided into contending factions. At first the division was along clan lines: Satsuma against Chōshū. Later we find it divided along lines of political ideals and programs: the conservatives (Yamagata and his protégés) against the liberals (Saionji and Okuma).

This new line-up in the Genrō body is a hopeful sign. There will always be Genrō in Japan, for there will always be statesmen of more than average ability. But in the future, it is to be hoped and expected, the Genrō will not be clan leaders interested chiefly in the promotion of clan interests, but statesmen interested in governmental policy and ideals.

Thus the reformers in Japan will probably obtain better results by seeking to place men of real ability and public interest among the Elder Statesmen rather than by attempting the difficult task of abolishing the Genrō.

The Peers of the Upper House

These aristocrats owe their position to tradition, not ability. Most of them are the successors of the military lords of feudalism and the literarily-inclined nobles of the ancient Imperial Court. When the Meiji Restoration came they were skilful enough to avoid destruction by bargaining with the leaders of the new era, and they arranged for the crea-

tion of the new peerage so that they might be compensated for the loss of their feudal privileges.

Banded together in the upper house of the Imperial Diet, these peers wield no small political power. But this power is not based on any real ability and can be justified by no contribution to the needs of the state. Therefore in the course of time it must vanish, or be modified in one or more of the following ways:

The House of Representatives, with the broadening of the suffrage and the development of a party system on Anglo-Saxon lines, may grow to sufficient power to enable it to dominate the upper house — and perhaps the cabinet also. The House of Peers, like its counterpart in England, will combat this tendency, but eventually it must lose such a battle, and its legislative power be limited. It seems probable that this will be the normal development. It is, of course, a matter of the comparatively distant future.

But this may not happen at all. The transformation may be wrought through the activities of a radical element in the House of Peers itself. The aristocratic conditions, and the class distinction of feudalism, have already shown signs of disappearance. The feudal distinctions between samurai and heimin and between daimyō and samurai, which were based upon the military necessities of the feudal age, are no longer clearly drawn. Only, in the country districts the ancient worship of aristocracy remains. This change in the national feeling is reflected among the aristocrats themselves, many of whom are beginning to doubt the value of their titles. There has even arisen in the House of Peers a radical group of young men who wish to give up their titles. They would prefer to sit in the House of Representatives. Although according to tradition a title bestowed by the Emperor cannot be relinquished, in the past few years this practice has been somewhat modified, and greater

modifications may be expected in the future. The young peers who separate themselves from the aristocracy in this way will doubtless join the ranks of the political parties, or even of labor, thus breaking the power of the peerage.

In the constitutional organization of the House of Peers itself is the third seed of destruction of the aristocratic power. A part of the personnel of the upper house is appointed by the Emperor. This appointment, of course, is made according to the advice of the cabinet. In the past the bureaucratic cabinets have taken advantage of this to pack the upper house with their own followers. In the future, if the political parties continue to form cabinets, they may follow the same procedure, and thus convert the House of Peers to the party point of view. This will be the death of the old aristocratic influence.

There remains a fourth way in which the power of the peerage may be destroyed: by the removal, in response to popular appeal, of the peerage itself. Popular feeling against the aristocrats has greatly increased in recent years, as the feudal influences have waned. The radicals among the people openly cry for the immediate abolition of the peerage. But these radicals are few in number. There is a group of more moderate reformers who want to deprive the aristocrats of their titles and power by a slow, painless process. Sons of princes, they contend, should be permitted to retain the title of marquis; sons of marquises should be counts; sons of counts, barons, and sons of barons, commoners. Thus in a few generations the whole scheme would disappear. Other reformers wish simply to abolish the inheritance of titles.

Such are the forces in operation against the aristocrats.

The Bureaucrats

The position of the bureaucrats is entirely different. A class of office holders, trained to the work, is necessary to any efficient government, and therefore the bureaucrats, as a class, will endure.

The bureaucrats have rendered great service to Japan. After the restoration they established a government on the western model in an astonishingly short time. They mastered the material details of western civilization with great acuteness, and applied them efficiently to the Japanese national life. To the bureaucrats must go much of the credit for creating, in the period of transition, a strong and efficient central government, which overcame the difference between the clans and established the new era with a minimum of civil war. In England, in the United States, in almost every country, terrific internal strife was necessary at periods in the national life corresponding to the Meiji Restoration in Japan. But the samurai who occupied the offices of government and became known as the bureaucrats of the new regime successfully and peacefully carried the nation through the critical period.

In doing so, however, the bureaucrats preserved many bad features of the old regime. They took upon themselves the attitude of superiority that had characterized the samurai in feudal days. The official class of the Meiji era was unbearably arrogant. Any officer of the government, down to the last policeman or clerk, considered himself better than any private citizen, from shopkeeper to banker. Much of the popular opposition to the bureaucrats today is due to this arrogance. The political parties, in their anti-bureaucratic propaganda, have not failed to take advantage of this.

In the defense of their position in the government, the bureaucrats did not scruple to utilize the popular worship

of the Emperor. They attempted to make it seem that loyalty to the Emperor meant also loyalty to the bureaucracy, and they spread this propaganda by means of the schools, which they controlled. This abuse has added to their present unpopularity. The Japanese people do not like those who try to utilize the Emperor.

In spite of these shortcomings, a bureaucratic class seems to be necessary to efficient government. Even should the political parties win the upper hand, they will not dare to abolish the civil service law, which creates such a class by competitive examination.

In Japan, the bureaucratic class will undoubtedly keep the upper hand for a while at least, because of certain peculiar political conditions. While Prince Yamagata lives his bureaucratic followers, who are entrenched in the Privy Council and the House of Peers, will not yield to the political party men. But even if he dies before the fall of the Hara cabinet, the bureaucrats are safe for a while. In such an event, the Genrō council, which the Emperor would summon to select a new prime minister, would consist of Matsukata, Okuma, Saionji and possibly Hara. Saionji and Hara are associated with the Seiyukai. They would therefore forbid the selection of a Kenseikai premier, such as Okuma would be likely to recommend, for a Kenseikai man would certainly dissolve the Diet and would use his official position to manipulate the new elections to the peril of the Seiyukai majority in the House of Representatives. There is no man of prime ministerial stature in the Seiyukai except Saionji and Hara themselves: therefore they would be unable to force the choice of one of their own party. Accordingly, they would compromise on a bureaucrat, with whom the Seiyukai could make a deal, as they did with Katsura and Yamamoto in the past.

Suppose that Matsukata and Okuma, both old men,

should die as well as Yamagata, before the fall of the Hara cabinet. In such an event it is possible that the Emperor would call no meeting of the Genrō council. The only man who could recommend the new premier would be Hara, the retiring prime minister. As I have shown, he would nominate a friendly bureaucrat rather than a Kenseikai man.

In the bureaucratic camp at present are three men who may win the next premiership. They are Baron Gotō, who comes of a small clan but who is closely associated with Chōshū; Viscount Makino, a Satsuma man who has won distinction in diplomacy; and Admiral Baron Saitō, officer of a small clan who has associated himself with the Satsuma navy clique.

The Militarists

The influence of miltarism in Japan is not easily to be weakened. The military clique might conceivably be destroyed, but the spirit of militarism would still live. The practice of thousands of years has embedded it deep in the soul of the Japanese people.

In feudal times, Bushido, the philosophy of the samurai's sword, was taught as the ideal way of life. In the Meiji era the military spirit thus developed was transformed to a blind love of the nation. The heimin had seen the samurai as their superiors; accordingly, the civilians of the new nation were taught to look upon the soldiers as their superiors.

The propaganda of militarism was spread broadcast in the temple, the school and the community. The Emperor, the army and the nation were preached as the trinity which all Japanese must worship.

Upon this spirit as a basis the military class has created a machine which holds a dominating position in the life of the nation. The military policy of Japan is dictated by

the General Staff, which is independent of every agency of government but the Emperor himself. The rule that ministers of the army and navy must be generals and admirals makes the military even more independent of any civil authority. Through its power of appointing military attachés to embassies and legations all over the world, the General Staff is in a position to dominate the diplomacy of the nation. For the War Department has a larger appropriation than the Foreign Office; and its envoys, with big allowances for expenses, can make better, quicker, and fuller reports on foreign affairs than can the members of the diplomatic corps. Thus the military clique is better informed than the civil government in matters pertaining to war and peace, and Japanese diplomacy is to a large extent controlled by the militarists. In matters of army reorganization, the General Staff makes plans without consulting any other agency, and then reports its plans to the helpless prime minister as "approved by the Emperor." The tradition of the schools and colleges is that the ablest young men must go into the army.

Thus strongly are the militarists entrenched. But in recent years the position of the military party—as distinguished from the spirit of militarism itself—have been somewhat weakened. The able young men just from college have not been as willing as in former years to align themselves with the generals and admirals. The Seiyukai has taken advantage of its new power to diminish the privileges which were accorded by the bureaucrats to the military men. Civilians have for the first time been appointed to the governorship of Formosa.

The number of able Satsuma and Chōshū men in high places in the army and navy has been diminished, and the prejudice of the people against those that remain has increased. The growth in power of capitalisim will hasten the

downfall of this military clique. But its fall will only strengthen the spirit of militarism, for it will remove the only prejudice against the army which the people feel.

The Political Parties

The political parties, which began as organizations of Gō-nō and petty samurai, have risen to a position of dominance in the civil government of Japan.

Students of politics now admit that party government is the system best suited to the needs of Japan. The old arguments of the bureaucrats based on the supposed inefficiency of parties or on the divine right of the Emperor to rule through the agency of the bureaucrats no longer carry weight.

The only opponent of the political parties which can threaten their supremacy in the future is labor, which is only beginning to rise as a political force.

The parties are now being feebly attacked on the ground that they are identified with the capitalists. But until this radical attitude gains general public approval the parties need not fear.

The expert politicians which the present parties have developed in the years of their struggle for power are quite able to keep out competition. Among them are many men who were trained in the bureaucracy. Their administrative and political skill is great. They are capable of using even the Privy Council and the House of Peers, the old strongholds of the bureaucrats, and the newly created Advisory Council on Foreign Relations, as weapons to overwhelm opposition. They know how to roll logs and to compromise as do none of their competitors, actual or potential.

The present parties do not want universal suffrage. This is natural enough, for they have been developed by a limited electorate whose strength would be decreased by an exten-

sion of the ballot. But they will use agitation for universal suffrage as a weapon against their bureaucratic opponents in the House of Peers and the Privy Council. In doing so they will be playing with fire. Unless they handle the subject with the greatest of tact, it will overwhelm them, and universal suffrage will be passed in spite of them, by the pressure of circumstances.

The people hope for this, but vainly. Elections under universal suffrage would be no freer of control by party bosses than are elections today. The Japanese masses know nothing of politics, and merely to give them the vote will not teach them.

The Capitalists

In Japan the capitalists are not welded together to form a distinct, conscious class as they are in some western countries. The merchants and financiers still remember the humble places they held in feudal times, and the people remember also. In the rural districts especially, where the industrial revolution has not progressed far, the people do not greatly respect capitalists.

The industrial revolution has in no part of Japan reached the stage where capital is concentrated in the hands of a very few powerful men. The great capitalists who have already emerged have not yet learned how to advance their cause by means of propaganda in the schools, temples and newspapers. They are not experienced politicians, and although they are closely allied with the political parties, they are not the dominating half of the alliance. Again, industrialism in Japan was fostered by the state, which means that the bureaucrats and the capitalists therefore have not the fighting spirit which captains of industry show in nations where the growth of industrialism meant a fierce competition under a government which kept its hands off.

When the Japanese financiers hear of a revolt against their power, they compromise rather than fight. For instance, when the rice riots of 1918 disturbed the peace of the capitalists they made haste to contribute to a fund to relieve the suffering of the rioters.

But the wealth of the nation will increase, and capital will grow stronger and stronger. And as it develops it will entrench itself as a political force by strengthening its aliance with the dominant political parties, and also by flirting with the militarists.

It will use the former connection to get protection for its property and to win the aid of the police in its struggle with labor. It will use foreign complications and imperialistic schemes appealing to patriotic pride and calling for a large army to divert the attention of the masses from domestic affairs.

The Workers

Labor is the weakest of the political forces we have been considering. It has recently burst out in several directions, but its strength is not to be overestimated on this account.

The city labor groups have recently held demonstrations for political purposes. They have participated in the agitation for universal suffrage. But none of their leaders has a clear idea of what he is after. Most of them are tools of the existing political parties. To be sure, these demonstrations are better ordered than were the riots of former years, when the workers would rise and smash everything in sight for no particular reason and to no advantage to themselves; but still the proletarian movement is poorly organized. The membership of unions, both craft and industrial, is growing, and the use of the strike and of sabotage is increasing; but to say that for these reasons labor has suddenly become strong is to exaggerate.

Participation in politics can offer no hope of success to Japanese labor. Labor in Japan has no leaders trained in the intricacy of politics. In countries like Great Britain the radical parties still feel this lack. How much more acutely is it felt in a nation where political action is entirely new to the workers? Moreover the expense of maintaining an effective political party in Japan is far greater than the laborites could hope to bear for many years to come.

Labor may possibly try to act politically through the media of existing parties, as does the American Federation of Labor. Such tactics can be attempted as soon as universal suffrage is won. But this would divide the labor movement into two groups, the idealists who object to the compromise which would be necessitated by dealing with the parties, and the opportunists who are willing to compromise. A division on these lines would greatly damage the potency of the labor movement for real progress. Also, a tendency to deal with existing parties would open labor to the tricks of politicians. Some clever opportunist such as Gotō or Osaki might undertake the leadership of the labor group, and thus rise to great power, at the expense of the ideals and true interests of the workers.

Therefore Japaneses labor will probably denounce politics and turn to industrial weapons to achieve its ends. The movement for One Big Union and for the use of the general strike for political purposes has already gained great headway among the workers. The most idealistic of the labor leaders favor something resembling British guild socialism, and the most radical of them are out-and-out syndicalists.

III

Such are the forces whose interplay is Japanese politics. Each takes its turn at being on top. The bureaucrats, led

by the Genrō and in alliance with the militarists, have held that position throughout the Meiji era and into the present Taishō era. It is now the turn of the political parties, in alliance with capital.

But no group, however strong, can become the dictator. No one force can make the others negligible. The politics of the nation will always be the resultant of their interplay, the balance of the forces.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The books in the list headed "A" have been thoroughly examined by the writer in the course of preparation for his study of Japanese politics. With a few exceptions, their treatment of the subject is impartial and their conclusions trustworthy. Some of them, especially those books by Dr. McLaren, Dr. Gulick and Mr. Clement are admirable. Mr. McGovern's book is a recent attempt to show a cross-section of the political mechanism of Japan, and it should be read in connection with the elaborate treatise by Dr. McLaren on the political history of the nation. It is not necessary to comment upon the accurate and painstaking book by Dr. Uyehara, which is commonly considered the best study of Japanese politics ever written in English. Mr. Clement's books are unrivaled in accuracy. It is fortunate for Japan that so brilliant a foreign scholar has studied her institutions. Mr. Kawakami's book, a dissertation written for the degree of Master of Arts in the University of Iowa, is worth reading; so are his other studies on international politics. In recommending Mr. Pooley's book, as well as that of Mr. Crow, the writer had some hesitation, for their attitude is plainly journalistic and bitterly prejudiced; but the books are, for the most part, vivid and suggestive, and should not be ignored as malicious propaganda. The profundity of Dr. Griffis' knowledge of Japan is an amazement even to native students. Mr. Ozaki's little book is a severe impeachment of the Japanese bureaucrats and militarists. He is the political leader of the democratic movement of Japan. Mr. Katayama's brief account of the Japanese labor movement is a valuable book written in English on this interesting and vital subject. He is living in exile in the United States because of his socialistic and radical opinions.

Those books in the list headed "B" are reliable works on Japan and the Japanese. The writer took great care in selecting them. Those books marked with * are especially recommended to the student of conditions in Japan.

The magazine articles in the list headed "C" are, for the most part, accurate accounts of recent phases of the Japanese political situation. Those marked * are especially recommended to students who wish to keep abreast of the latest developments in this field. The articles by Mr. Clement, Dr. Griffis and Dr. Dewey are most important.

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